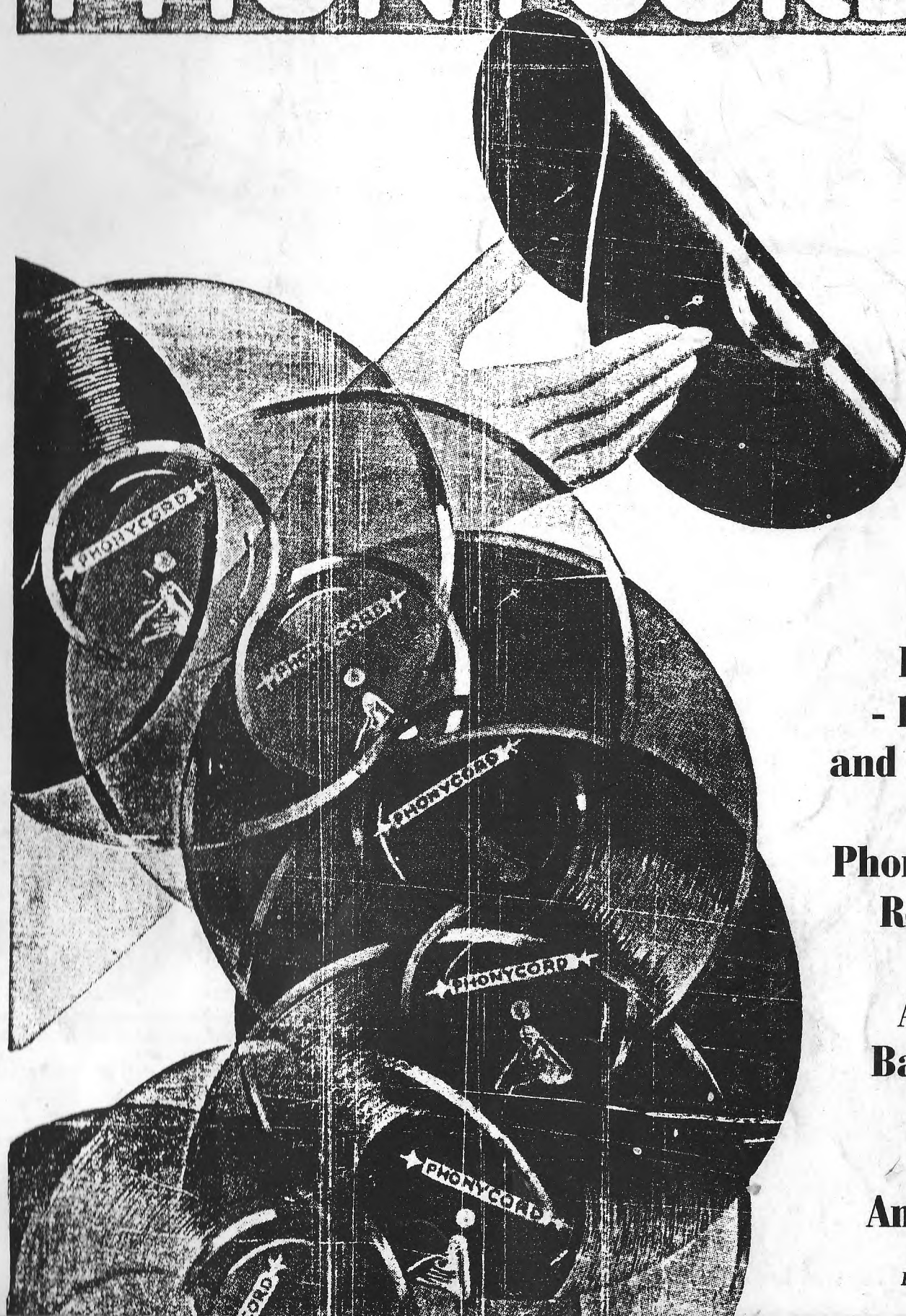


THE COLOURED FLEXIBLE RECORD

# PHONYCORD



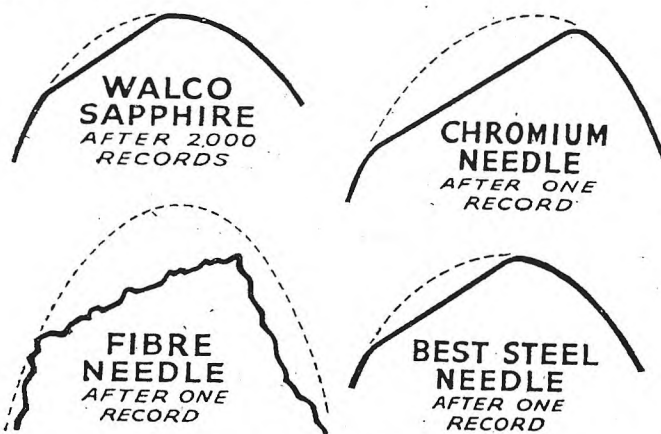
**Part 1**  
**- history**  
**and listing**  
**of**  
**Phonycord**  
**Records**  
**by**  
**Arthur**  
**Badrock**  
**and**  
**Frank**  
**Andrews**

# 4 RUN YOUR GRAMOPHONE TWO YEARS WITHOUT CHANGING THE NEEDLE the NEW Walco GENUINE Sapphire GRAMOPHONE NEEDLE

Walco Genuine Sapphire Needles will take a finer polish than any other substance in the world with the solitary exception of diamonds. Because of this they not only last infinitely longer than any other type of needle but their use results in the virtual elimination of record wear. One Walco Sapphire Needle will give you two years freedom from needle changing and ensure brilliant tonal quality over the full scale. Here is scientific proof of "Walco" durability.

## NEEDLE WEAR

Below you will find shadowgraph tracings of the various needles tested. These show the points enlarged hundreds of times. Notice that the finest steel needle is worn off more by one record than the sapphire by 2,000 records.



Believing you want facts, not generalities, we have had the following laboratory tests made on an ordinary gramophone, using records purchased in the open market. Please read it carefully, for you will see that the Walco Sapphire disposes of the needle problem.

## LABORATORY TEST

Made with One Walco Sapphire on Ordinary Gramophone.

### FIRST TEST

Twenty records played 100 times each.

### RESULT :

No discernible wear on any record. Surface noise almost inaudible and unchanged between 1st and 2,000th playing.

### SECOND TEST :

After above 2,000 playings one side of a new record was played half-way across 250 times.

### RESULT :

No observable difference between the half of this record played 250 times and unplayed half—either to the ear or through powerful glass. No difference in surface noise between played and unplayed half of this record.

### THIRD TEST :

Needle removed and magnified 500 times with shadowgraph.

### RESULT :

Needle tip showed less wear than steel, fibre or chromium needles after one playing. Needle good for approximately 1,000 more playings.

Order a "Walco" Genuine Sapphire Needle now and avoid the annoyance of constant needle changing. Priced at 12/- the "Walco" not only pays for itself by saving the cost of scrapped needles but prevents the constant wear to which expensive records would otherwise be subjected. Every "Walco" Needle is shadowgraphed twice during manufacture to ensure absolute uniformity and tested to ensure durability, perfect smoothness and correct scientific dimensions. Write to-day for descriptive literature.

R.A. Rothermel Ltd.

Canterbury Road, High Road, Kilburn, N.W.6.

Phone: MAlda Vale 6055



THE PERFECT PERMANENT NEEDLE



Please send me the Walco Sapphire Needle descriptive folder

Name .....

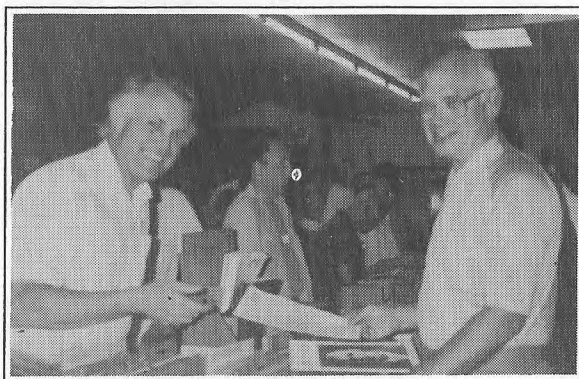
Address .....

This advertisement appeared in October 1938, see John Booth's article on page 2395 to find why these claims were considered by December of that year to be less than truthful and honest.



# Nipper's Bit

Rarely do I get the chance to place photographs in my bit, but the following has been sent to me and shows Master with an American reader, Quentin Riggs, at the TMR sales desk during a Record Fair in Wimbledon earlier this year. The photograph was taken by an Old Master.



Master has had many Christmas cards from readers and has asked me to thank you one and all for your kind wishes, pity no one thought to send me a bone or chewy, still you can't win 'em all. Together we would both wish you all a prosperous new year, well it can't be as bad as 1992, can it? I just hope that it wasn't our unearthing of the 1952 recording by HRH Princess Elizabeth (as she then was) that set her *annus terribilis* in train. I'll have to have words with one of the Royal corgis and get some inside information.

It was planned to carry a interview with Doreen Harris, sometime partner of Leon Cortez, about her career with the 'Coster Band' et al. Unfortunately she has had a spell in hospital due to a little heart trouble and consequently we have not been able to meet with her. We wish her a speedy recovery.

Until the financial exchange rates settle down and we know at what rate Pounds and Dollars (particularly) are worth, we shall not be importing any books or CDs from the USA. It is unfortunate that it is always the small collectors and publishers that suffer under these circumstances, perhaps the men who reportedly made millions on 'Black Wednesday' might care to reflect upon our plight. We know that we are not the only magazine in this field to have voiced these sentiments, or to have suspended imported material. I see in back numbers of TMR that Mr Bayly wrote very similar words in the early 'seventies. *'Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose'*.

If the quality of the front covers is not to our normal standard, please don't blame our printers. Considering the quality of some of the originals we give them - for which we thank all of you who send them in, and realise that you do your best - they really do excel themselves. But we really felt that this was such a rarity it was worth reproducing. Thank you gentlemen.

You may well wonder why Master has written about the death of a radio station, well it is just that he thought that it was such an integral part of the development of the sales of popular music records in the UK both pre- and post-war that it should not go unrecorded in these columns.

NIPPER.

## TALKING MACHINE REVIEW 82

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### Subscriptions

£10.00 for four issues (UK and Europe) post paid. [Other parts of the world are, £15.00] ( US \$25.00 ) by surface mail. Airmail rates on application.

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See note below for dollar payments.

Articles for possible publication are welcome and can be submitted on word processor disk and/or manuscript, or camera ready copy. Any items required for return please enclose appropriate postage.

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### Payments to TMR

An Act of Parliament came into effect July 1st, 1992 concerning cheques, these can only be credited to the named payee's account WHICH MUST be exactly as the name on the account. Our account is named 'TALKING MACHINE REVIEW'.

Cheques or postal/money orders made out to any other title cannot be accepted.

DO NOT make items payable to 'T.M.R.'

US Dollar checks should be payable to JOHN W BOOTH.

Eurocheques: CANNOT BE ACCEPTED!

The best methods for other countries are, a Giro cheque if your country issues them, or a Bank Transfer direct to our account.

The details for transfers are: "Talking Machine Review", sort code: 07-00-93, account number: 33333334 - 0394/702 250 382 Town: Swindon.

Alternatively we can accept, at your risk, bank notes of the following currencies, England, Scotland, Northern Ireland, (all at par). Eire, France, Netherlands, or USA. (converted to the nearest whole note at tourist rates).

Credit Cards: None can be accepted.

You may pay at any of the fairs we attend, see the Diary.

If any existing or potential subscriber has a problem in transacting a payment, please write and we will try to find a mutually acceptable method for your remittance.

# Junkshoppers' Column

**Arthur Badrock and  
Frank Andrews**

## The Phonycord Label

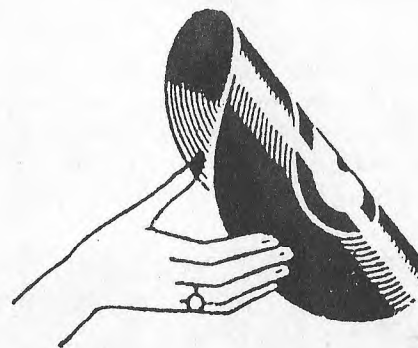
Out of all the flexible records which came on to the market from 1929 onwards, the Phonycord Record is one of the least common. It also seems to have the most complex international background and catalogue. Arthur Badrock's first article on Phonycord appeared in Matrix No. 52 (April 1964), followed up by further mentions in issues 55 and 61. In the Swedish Orkester Journalen for December 1970 Bjorn Englund wrote a piece on Swedish Phonycord. Hans Peter Woessner of Zurich has sent us some notes on the Swiss involvement in Phonycord. More of the English issues have come into our possession together with photocopies of catalogues, and reproductions from Holland. Frank has done his customary digging and what follows is a preliminary statement of our findings. It is certainly not complete and any additional information will be most welcome.

### Phonycord GmbH Berlin

IN 1929 ALBERT OTTO THOMAE of 8 Viktoria Luiseplatz, Berlin, applied for Royal Letters Patent, (file 337437) for talking machine records of a special nature. Part of the abstract states

Raw material for the manufacture of Gramophone Records consists of gelatinized acetyl cellulose with camphor, or camphor substitute materials, which is dried to a temperature of 40 to 80 degrees centigrade, the drying time being approximately 24 hours for each .1 of a millimetre of thickness. To make a record the record material is made fluid by heat or dissolved in a suitable solvent and the matrix carrying the sound record impression is coated therewith by spraying or by brushing on. The coated matrix is then subjected to pressure at 200 atmospheres, or over, whilst being heated to a temperature of between 60 to 80 degrees centigrade. Two single sided records may be formed into a double sided record by sticking or otherwise joining together the unrecorded sides.

This application was sealed on 1st July 1929.



## PHONYCORD FLEXIBLE

### Trade Marks

The Phonycord trade mark registration was made 10th October 1929, number 408560/ T17649 to Phonycord GmbH, Berlin, W.35, Potsdamstrasse 123b in business as producers and traders in musical instruments, strings, gramophone records, gramophone needles, repeating apparatus, horns and cabinets.

On the 12th October 1929 408668/ B27620 Hand folding disc record design was registered to Phonycord GmbH.

A similar trademark of a hand folding a record would appear on Goodson records and may well have been the subject of the Court proceedings involving Phonycord in London about October 1930.

### Swiss company acquires the rights

On the 28th April 1930 a company formerly known as the Electromophon Schallplatten AG of Vaihingen a Fildem became the Electromophon Schallplatten AG of St Gallen, Switzerland. On its formation it acquired the exclusive manufacturing rights for unbreakable discs from the Phonycord GmbH of Berlin for 100 000 Reichmarks and the business for 625 000 Swiss francs.

The new company included an administrative council whose members were Dr Guido Eigenmann, a lawyer of St Gallen, appointed as President; Richard Fischer, from Berlin, consul, businessman and legal representative of Phonycord GmbH of Berlin; Karl Ebner, from Stuttgart, member of the board of directors of the old Electromophon company; August Daub, buyer, of Stuttgart; Emil Schoch, a bank director from Sternenberg in St Gallen; the association secretary was one August Schmirmer of St Gallen and the final member was Dr Oskar Seiler of St Gallen.

Although the Swiss company had acquired the rights to manufacture the records in the catalogue which Ron Shaw kindly loaned us, the introductory address 'to all record fans' has both company names at the bottom, the Swiss company above the German. In this address the public were recommended to use the Phonycord WinkelNadel (Angle-Needle), the trademark for which had been obtained on the 12th April 1930.



## Phonycord Records - Germany

These were probably being issued in Germany from about May 1930 and continued until sometime during 1931. All the records used material which had already appeared on the Artiphon label, part of the Eisner group. The main continental series which we have listed are:

### GERMAN 10" SERIES 1 to 691 (highest number known)

This series used odd numbers only so there were just under 350 issues of which we have details of all but thirty-eight.

In addition to many issues by the Jazz-Sinfonie-Orchester of Eddy Wallis there are blocks of Spanish songs sung by S Crespo with 6000 'matrix' numbers, songs in French by Eugen Bisantz, Swedish music by the Svea Orchester, Helsingborg (possibly a German orchestra), and Swiss harmonica solos by Walter Wild.

Dotted among the early issues are some recordings from the American Plaza group, these include number 77 *'Let A Smile be Your Umbrella'* (3202) | *'Medley of Old Time Favourites'* with vocal by Irving Kaufmann (3203), listed in the catalogue as Missouri Jazz-Band (New York) but the only copy seen was anonymous. The first side is Mike Markel's version, Plaza matrix 7668. The second side is probably Plaza matrix 7926, recorded on 19th April 1928, and entered in the Plaza file simply as 'Orchestra with incidental singing by George Beaver' (this was one of Kaufmann's many pseudonyms). Both these issues have turned up in England. there are several sides by Ferera & Paaluhi and by Ferera's Hawaiians, all from Plaza. The Missouri Jazz-Band's *'Among My Souvenirs'* (2997) | *'Down South'* (2999) on German Phonycord 87 are probably Plaza masters 7619 and 7664, both by Mike Markel. The version of *'Fifty Million Frenchmen'* on 101 as by the Jazz-Orchester should turn out to be the one by Jerry Macy and his Gang, from Banner 1963, matrix 7177. Apart from a reissue of a Frank Ferera coupling there is then an absence of American material until 389 which couples Irving Berlin's *'Always'* (3820-3) as The Missouri Jazz-Band (New York) with a saxophone solo by Rudolph Wiedoeft of *'Saxema'* (4881-3). These are both the correct original matrix numbers and not numbers assigned by Artiphon. The first side dates from early 1926 and will doubtless be traced back to Grey Gull or Dandy. The second side is even earlier, being a 1920 recording from Emerson 10204. Two more from Plaza and then we come to the most interesting batch, issued in October 1930, containing some rather cheeky pseudonyms. This batch is worth listing in full as it may prevent some readers from buying records unheard which are not what they seem to be.

#### Phonycord 467 Geoffrey Gelder's Recorders

3878 Should I? ft vc

4033 Telling It To The Daisies ft

\* Both sides are American Grey Gull recordings and are nothing to do with the English bandleader Geoffrey Gelder.

3878 is from Van Dyke 81838 by The All Star Players. The original of 4033 is untraced but it was issued in Britain on Goodson 215 as The Metropolitan Dance Orchestra. Number 467 has been listed as Jack Martin's Musicians but we show it under the name that appears in the catalogue. Confirmation of this or any other details of any issues from anyone who

actually owns the records would be welcome.

#### Phonycord 469 Jack Martin's Magicians USA

4013 It Happened in Monterey wz vc

4044 Just Like in a Story Book ft vc

\* 4013 from Van Dyke 81866 by the Bar Harbor Orchestra  
4044 from Van Dyke 81878 Frank Novak and his Music

#### Phonycord 471 Jack Martin's Magicians USA

3949 Sing You Sinners ft vc

4045C Absence Makes the Heart Grow Fonder ft vc

\* 3949 from Supreme 1849 by the Bar Harbor Orchestra  
4045 remains untraced on Grey Gull

#### Phonycord 473 Percival Mackey's 1930 Players

4057 Reminiscing ft

3910 The Man From the South ft vc

\* 4057 untraced on Grey Gull, issued in GB on Goodson 230 as White Way Serenaders

3910 came from Van Dyke 81845 as Jamaica Dance Orch. (this was the usual Mosiello-Sanella studio group).

One must assume that Percival Mackey was unaware of the misuse of his name.

#### Phonycord 475 Percival Mackey's 1930 Players

4015 When It's Springtime in the Rockies wz vc

3889 The One That I Love Can't Be Bothered With Me

\* 4015 from Van Dyke 5064 as Newport Dance Orchestra  
3889 from Van Dyke 81840 as Majestic Dance Orchestra (another Grey Gull studio band, this time Charles Magnante on accordion is also present).

#### Phonycord 477 Percival Mackey's 1930 Players

4070 Dancing With Tears In My Eyes ft vc

3963 If I Were King ft vc

\* 4070 from Van Dyke 81880 by Sam Lanin's Orchestra. The featured trombonist has been listed as Miff Mole.

3963 untraced on Grey Gull, issued in GB on Goodson 203 as Metropolitan Dance Orchestra.

#### Phonycord 479 Max Sanella

4065 I Need you More Each Day saxophone solo w piano

3977 Margherite wz

\* Both obviously by Andy Sanella. 4065 untraced on Grey Gull. 3977 issued on Madison 6012 as Venetian Waltz and on some English issues as Valse Marguerite. Frank Banta is shown as the pianist on the second side and may well be on the first.

#### Phonycord 481 Charles Singer's [sic] & George Player

3984 Prancin', Dancin', Yodelin', Man.

3985 Yodelin' Bill.

\* 3984 from Grey Gull 4307 as Al Bernard [?]; GdsE 211 as Bernard and Kamplain. 3985 from Grey Gull 4304 as by

by Al Bernard [?]; GdsE 211 as Al Bernard & Harry Gay.

**Phonycord 483** Charles Singer's [sic] & George Player  
3965 I'll Be Thinking of You, Little Gal (w guitar)  
3982 Sing Hallelujah

\* 3965 possibly Gene Autry, Sunrise 33070 as Tom Long  
3982 from Radiex 970 by Al Bernard

**Phonycord 485** Frank Madison & his Harmony Five  
4061 I'm In the Market for You  
4034 A Cottage for Sale

\* Untraced on Grey Gull

**Phonycord 487** Harry McAllen (USA) w orchestra  
3918 I'm Following You  
4064 If I Had a Girl Like You

\* Untraced on Grey Gull

**Phonycord 489** The Harlem Four (negro vocal quartet)  
3948 Jerusalem Morning  
3947 His Troubles Was Hard

\* Both from Grey Gull 4312 by the Alabama Four

A further batch of Grey Gull material was released the following month but this time the company did not pick their pseudonyms from the Who's Who of British dance band leaders. At least twelve dance band versions including seven original compositions by Mike Masiello, the Grey Gull 'house' trumpeter and four by Andy Sanella, the 'house' reeds man and steel guitarist, were issued as by Fred Roberts Jazz-Sinfoniker and Jack Martin und sein Orchester. From then on our file on this series is incomplete and the only issues of particular interest that we know of are eight sides by the black American contralto Marian Anderson who had gone to Germany during 1930 in order to study.

## German 2000 series

We know of only one coupling, 2000, by the Phonycord Sinfonie Orchester, of a Christmas Selection, issued - unsurprisingly - in December 1930.

## German 3000 series

we have details of three issues 3003, 3004 and 3005, the first two consisting of zither solos by Max Rostock and the latter is a record of organ solos by C A J Parmentier from American Grey Gull.

## 4000 series

In this series the first 11 issues are Czechoslovakian recordings of orchestras with vocal refrains. All have a 5000 matrix number and probably originated from Artiphon. Another block in the same series is described in the catalogue as Jugoslav.

## German 6000 series

Numbers 6000 and 6001, both by the Phonycord-Marsch-Orchester, were issued in November 1930. We have no others listed.

## German 8000 series

We have details of the first six issues. The first three were issued in November 1920 and are by a concert orchestra directed by Carl Robrecht. The next three are all from Grey Gull, labeled as by Fred Roberts Jazz-Sinfoniker. They include a California Ramblers' group playing *Happy Days Are Here Again* and The Kansas City Blue Boys' version of *Makin' The Grade*.

Next issue we look further at the Phonycord Record and the English issues.

# Of springs and needles

We are often asked about the sizes and availability of gramophone motor springs and needles. As far as the supply of replacement springs is concerned readers are referred to TMR No.22 (available from the editorial office for £1.00) page 197. This featured a reprint of Messrs. J Stead & Co's October 1954 "Vulcan" brand mainsprings specification sheet. This list not only gives their equivalent numbers, but also detailed dimensions (metric and imperial) of width, thickness, length, and diameter; together with the type of ends (eg Pear shape, keyhole, hookend, hub centres etc.). All arranged by cross index to the make of motor or machine. Unfortunately this extensive range of springs is now unavailable.

Should you need a replacement spring for a gramophone supplies are still available from J & M Wholesale (Bedford) Ltd., who, in spite of their name, will supply individual orders for springs. Whilst their range is not as extensive as the original "Vulcan" range, it is possible to provide a spring for most machines in existence. Details of their range appear below, but you are advised to check with Mr or Mrs Childs before ordering. Their correspondence address is 16 Hardwick Road, Bedford, MK42 9LF (NO PERSONAL CALLERS PLEASE), phone (0234) 340829. Steel needles are available from TMR at £1.50 for 100 needles (UK post paid). Please state whether you require Soft, Medium, or Loud tone.



# Quality!

*I*N our preliminary announcements we stated that the "Phonycord" would be a record of *Quality*. In fulfilment of that promise we now offer you the latest star in the contralto firmament - - -

## MARIAN ANDERSON

WITH PIANO ACCOMPANIMENT

P94 { Heav'n, Heav'n (I got a Robe)  
Sometimes I feel like a motherless child

### Here are a few more records in the February List

#### INSTRUMENTAL

TIERGARTEN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA  
P 91 { "Maid of the Mountains," Selection.  
Parts 1 and 2 (Fraser-Simson)

THE VIENNA CAMEO ORCHESTRA  
P 92 { "Hydropathen," Waltz (Gungl)  
"España," Waltz (Waldteufel)

PHONYCORD MILITARY BAND  
P 93 { "Bandmaster," March (Jurek)  
"Bosnia," March (Ed. Wagner)

#### VOCAL

LOUIS van de SANDE (Tenor with Orchestra)  
P 95 { Largo. "Ombrai mai fu" (Handel)  
"Caro mio ben" (Giodani)

ALAN STUART (Baritone with Orchestra)  
P 96 { Star of my Soul from "The Gei-ha"  
Queen of my Heart from "Dorothy"

#### LIGHT VOCAL

CON CONWAY (Tenor with Dance Band)  
P 97 { "If I could be with you"  
"After the Party"

FRANK ROBESON (with Guitar acc.)

P 99 { "A chaw of tobacco and a little drink"  
"Sing Hallelujah!"

#### DANCE

JACK MARTIN'S MAJESTIC DANCE BAND  
(with Vocal Refrain)

P 100 { "Wonder Bar," Selection.  
Parts 1 and 2.

EDDIS WALIS' SYMPHONIC DANCE  
ORCHESTRA (with Vocal Refrains)

P 103 { "Under the Roofs of Paris," Waltz  
"Love is like that" Fox-Trot  
(both from film "Under the Roofs of Paris.")

TOMMY KINSMAN AND HIS LONDON  
FRIVOLITIES (with Vocal Refrains)

P 104 { "I bring a love song," Fox-Trot  
"You will remember Vienna," Waltz  
(both from film "Viennese Nights")

P 106 { "Love is like a song," Fox-Trot  
"Say 'Oui,' Cherie," Fox-Trot  
(both from film "What a Widow")

ALL 10-INCH DOUBLE SIDED 2/6 EACH

➔ **PHONYCORD** ➔

PHONYCORD LTD., 24 DENMARK STREET, LONDON, W.C.2

Write or telephone Temple Bar 3601.2 for Complete List.

*This advertisement for Phonycord records in Britain appeared in February 1931. It details some of the first releases in England and will be the subject of the next part of this article.*

# Needles

John W Booth

During the nineteen thirties much was written on the subject of needles and how best to play records. Much of it seems somehow naive today, but within those words were some pearls of wisdom. In this article I hope to publish not just the myths, but also some of the pearls from the experts of yesteryear. It is not uncommon for us to be asked today if we really do play our 78s on the 'wind-up' gramophone. "It'll wear them out." Well I don't normally at home, except ..... well I really don't think that any electric/electronic rig can quite beat the sound of an early electric recording played on a re-entrant. And the tracking weight of the 4A sound box is guaranteed to follow the most battered and abused groove that there is, whereas the SME/Shure partnership even if coaxed with a Norwegian 100øre piece can't always play the offerings nearly always found these days in the local charity shops. (Why, Oh Why, do I buy them?).

Sometimes I wonder who first used the word stylus to describe the commonly called gramophone needle. (Was it Edison?) My Oxford Dictionary gives no clue, other references also state "Origin obscure", but in any case whilst it seems today to differentiate between the small highly engineered diamond tipped device used with electronic reproduction of vinyl records and the crude piece of steel (or whatever) used with shellac 78s, the word was in use before the second world war. Harry Gaydon, described as a consultant and who had his own small business at one time building gramophones, used the term styli [sic] in his book *The Art and Science of the Gramophone*. In 1938 P Wilson, well known in Britain at that time for his technical discourses, using the word stated that he preferred it to 'point' when describing the sharp end of the needle.

Wilson wrote an article on needles for *'The Gramophone'* and subsequently presented his material at a presentation to Gillingham (Kent) Gramophone Society in which he stated... "Bearing in mind that ultimately the 'driving point impedance' which is the measure of the difficulty which the stylus has in following a pre-determined groove, will depend far more on the characteristics of the pick-up or sound box than upon the the type of needle, let us inquire for a moment in what ways the shape of the needle and of the groove will affect the question." He then went on to discuss difficulties faced in tracking: (1) A needle too tight in the groove, (2) Entry at an angle and not vertically [!] (3) Grooves of non-constant width, 'Waisted'. This latter possibly he admitted was inherent in the lateral cut record and had to be considered as a design parameter in stylus/needle design. Number 2 he stated was necessary in order to ensure firm vertical contact between needle and record. Here he was surely wrong as the correct tracking angle has always been considered to be 60 degrees to avoid excessive wear of the record. He proffered the proposition that the ideal was a needle with identical shape and form as the groove, ie— a shallow groove with a broad base.

Unfortunately the actual shape in cross section of most

record grooves will vary quite a lot. Factors in play (given an unplayed record) - and pardon the pun! - are: The condition of the cutting head during recording, the method and quality of electroplating the matrix/master and stampers, the material composition used to press the disc. Harry Gaydon in the 'twenties blamed most of the problems on the use of inferior materials, uneven textures and rough surfaces. It was thought at one time that a spherical base cut would be the ideal - certainly it had proved its worth with Pathe vertical cuts and Edisons, but due to the near impossibility of attaching a small ball to a narrower shank this was not viable as a commercial possibility. The compromise radius seemed to be about 2/1000ths inch. Bearing in mind that tracking weights then were in the order of 2 or 3 ozs. (55 to 85 grams) and that straight tone-arms could provide a difference in tip angle of up to twenty degrees tracking error, the effect of the application of a diamond tip with anything less than a perfectly polished spherical surface to a record surface beggars belief!

So the early demise of many flexible celluloid discs was somewhat inevitable, give the conditions under which most must have been played. The angled needles sold by Phonocord are noteworthy. [SEE PAGES 2401 AND 2402 OF THIS ISSUE.] Wilson preferred a hard wearing surface material for the needle with a low [mechanical] impedance and a spherical tip of 0.002 of an inch radius. He maintained that in these circumstances provided all else was correctly aligned record wear should be very low; frequency response wide; and very little distortion encountered. I find it remarkable that he did not concern himself with the effect of soundbox weight in his theory. Choosing to ignore one of the major factors (other than in the measurement of mechanical impedance) in wear and distortion, he stated that if the impedance is high there can be no guarantee of either small record wear or good quality [of reproduction]. "The only thing that can be said is that the case will be somewhat better than if an ordinary steel needle were used."

Clearly Wilson was an advocate of diamond tipped needles, but what of the sapphire tip, or of the hardened (precious) metal tip?

Anyone wishing to preserve a collection of records from wear had two alternatives open to them either to store them away in a cool, dry atmosphere, never to be played (and we have heard of this happening even in this day and age, although the probably apocryphal story mentions a bank vault somewhere.) Or needles made of a material softer than the record could be used. The fibre or thorn! Made from treated,— 'doped' was one expression used, presumably to indicate the use of cellulose — fibre or bamboo slivers. They were extremely popular with some, mainly classical, collectors and still have a following today. Indeed there seems to be a constant demand for the fibre needle sharpeners cropping up for sale from time to time. The main disadvantage of a resharpened needle must be that no matter how well made the sharpening device may be, there can be no certainty about the shape or size of the point. Wilson in his talk even advocated at this juncture the application of a high mass in the tone arm for fibre needles. He even disputed that friction was the cause of wear.

Many claims were made by manufacturers for differing types of needles, Wurlitzer sold an elliptical precious



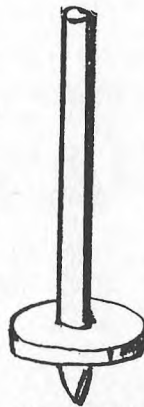
metal needle 'Permo-Point' advertised as playing a minimum of 2000 sides. E M Ginn of EMG Gramophone fame advertised a range of non-metallic needles in 1939 for up to sixty playings. As they cost two shillings for ten and three and sixpence for the sharpener they were not cheap, low cost steel needles could be had for 100 for a shilling and represented a repeat business for the local dealer. R A Rothermel a well known firm of factors and retailers in the industry announced in September 1938 the introduction of a new 'Walco' sapphire needle, claiming that it would not need changing for two years, (2000 playings). It cost twelve shillings. However by December the same year 'The Gramophone' reported that they had used a 'Walco' sapphire until it had played 787 ten inch sides. Then it was discarded. Not because of record wear but because "it was evident that that the point of of the sapphire was not reaching the bottom of the groove. Causing a loss of reproduction and needle buzz, caused by riding the walls of the groove." So much for 2000 playings!

A decade earlier matters were very little different, indeed the range of needle shapes was probably greater. The drawings show nine styles of styluses commonly available in Britain during 1928. One shilling would buy one hundred 18 carat gold plated 'Petmecky' De-Luxe needles. Claimed to be 'self-sharpening' they were spear shaped and supposedly good for ten playings of the new electrical recordings. Quite what the advantages of such soft gold plating was supposed to be on a needle that 'self-sharpened' is hard to imagine. The spear shaped needle was originally invented to eliminate surface noise. It was considered at the time that the only cause of surface noise was the roughness of the material at the bottom of the groove. As this would only produce vibrations transmitted in a vertical plane to the sound box by molecular action, the use of the spear point needle — with the flat part of the 'spear' at right angles to the groove walls— would dampen and prevent this 'molecular transmission of surface noise'. Edison Bell also sold a gold plated needle which they claimed would add 75% to the life of a record. A 'satisfied customer' wrote that they brought out notes unheard of with other needles. At least they made no extravagant claims about the life of the needle. They also had in their range a trade mark registered as 'Sympathetic Chromic Needle' quite what it was in sympathy with I have been unable to find out. The principle was that the needle was double ended and by use of a special adapter fixed into the normal sound box stylus bar each point could be played until wearing out, it was then a matter of removing the needle and replacing it with the unused point exposed. It was possible to control the volume by varying the length of needle exposed from the adapter.

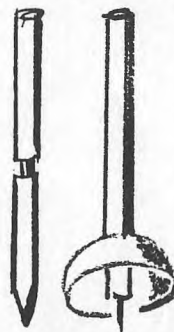
[Illustration above]

Esoteric names were also used for needles, this was termed the 'Cleopatra', of very thick cross section — thicker than the stylus bar hole — it disappeared shortly after the First World War. Another attempt at extracting more volume from the record is shown at top of the next column, here a collar of metal was fixed round the shank during manufacture. Unfortunately this 'improvement' took its toll in the life of the

record. Many a good dance record must have suffered by being subjected to this monstrosity.



all one with a small bell shaped 'hood' over the point. I can only assume that this was to prevent unwary users seeing exactly how much shellac was being extracted from the groove! Which brings me to another groove cutter; in the early part of the century a short lived product was marketed with three points

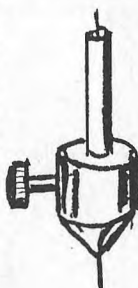
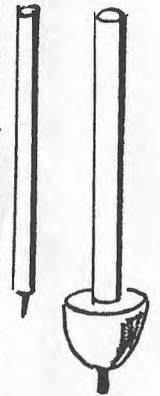


made of glass. The 'Trident' point stylus was designed to play several sides per point, the user merely rotated the glass head until all three points had been worn out, thus obviating the tedious chore of needle changing. A similar claim was made for the star wheel [right] the points of which were not much harder than normal chromium plated steel. It is to be hoped that no point was ever reused.

Other devices designed to save the 'problem' of changing needles have included magazines to hold fifty normal needles, changing was effected by pressing a button on the magazine, the weight of this device added another two or three ounces to the sound box. I have also read of an invention that dispensed needles cut from a reel of wire, again the added weight to the playing head must have been considerable.

I can only say that with any gramophone that I have used the effort of changing a low cost needle at the same time as removing and changing a record is merely incidental. The obvious conclusions to be drawn are that man is inherently lazy and that marketing and sales men will always use this weakness as an *entree* to promote sales. Else why would the various remote control devices that we all regale ourselves with today have made such large strides in international sales?

Well that concludes this small dissertation and I must get ready for bed and prepare the 'Teasmaid' for the morning.



## PERMO-POINT GRAMOPHONE NEEDLE

SAVES MONEY  
SAVES TIME  
SAVES BOTHER

Elliptical precious metal point. Scientifically made. True tonal clarity. No changing. Unimaginable smoothness. Prolongs record life. **Minimum, 2,000 plays.**

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Leicester Square, W.C.2

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**8 Jours à l'Essai**

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Nouveauté Sensationnelle : Chants accompagnés par l'Orchestre complet.

**INVENTION NOUVELLE**

Diaphragme à Membrane de mica indestructible et pointe de saphir extra-fin.

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Le Disque Pathé se présente en quatre diamètres différents, savoir : 17 c/m (1.25); 21 c/m (2 fr.), 28 c/m (5 fr.); 50 c/m (16 fr.)

L'ampleur de la sonorité et la beauté de l'expression augmentent avec le diamètre du disque.



**DERNIÈRE INVENTION !**

Les disques et les diaphragmes à aiguilles sont vaincus ! Tout le monde exige les merveilleux disques Pathé et chacun fait remplacer son diaphragme à aiguilles, désagréable, agaçant et démodé par le diaphragme à saphir, inusable, toujours prêt à fonctionner et qui donne des résultats tenant positivement du prodige !

Adaptation instantanée et sans frais.

Nous nous mettons à la disposition de tous les possesseurs de machines parlantes à disques pour perfectionner leur instrument et le mettre au niveau de la science actuelle.

Révolution radicale dans l'art de la reproduction de la musique et du chant.

**30 MOIS de CRÉDIT**  
**6 fr. par MOIS**

Les Disques Pathé donnent les plus longues auditions.

**Les Conquêtes de la Science**

Le cylindre de cire a été abandonné pour le disque à aiguilles qui a été abandonné, à son tour, pour le disque à saphir, supplantant l'aiguille, donnant le ton juste et le souffle vibrant de la voix humaine.

Attention aux grossières imitations !

Comparez la longueur de l'audition, la maîtrise du chant et le détail des accompagnements.

**D**es prodiges en prodiges, nous tenons enfin l'ultime perfection !

Le Phonographe à disques, le meilleur, vient d'être complètement métamorphosé par les merveilleuses inventions Pathé : La suppression de l'aiguille et son remplacement par un saphir doux, extra-fin, et la création sensationnelle d'un nouveau disque d'une incomparable perfection.

Le nouveau diaphragme Pathé est une pièce remarquable de précision mécanique, sa plaque vibrante, en mica, est éternelle et son saphir fin est non seulement inusable par lui-même, mais il n'altère jamais le disque à l'usage. Comme rendement, la supériorité du Saphir sur l'aiguille est écrasante.

Le disque Pathé est la merveille des merveilles, d'un éclat sans pareil et d'une force d'intonation prodigieuse. Il rend la voix humaine fidèlement et la musique au ton juste. Il a la force, la puissance et le modelé de l'orchestre, la netteté, l'ampleur et la délicatesse de la voix des merveilleux artistes qui ont interprété les œuvres de choix.

**NOUS EN DONNONS LA GARANTIE LA PLUS FORMELLE**

Le disque Pathé a été créé avec un souci d'art incontestable. C'est le seul qui mérite sincèrement le titre de Disque Artistique. — Enfin, le répertoire Pathé comprend 20.000 morceaux en toutes langues qui constituent la plus prodigieuse bibliothèque vocale et instrumentale qui existe au monde !

L'appareil de luxe que nous offrons est accompagné de 130 morceaux sur disques double face, choisis parmi les meilleurs.

DESCRIPTION DE L'APPAREIL : 29 x 29 c/m à la base, 13 c/m de haut, ébénisterie de grand luxe, grand pavillon mobile, forme tulipe, de 1<sup>m</sup>25 de circonférence à l'ouverture, 55 c/m de long. Nouveau diaphragme Pathé avec membrane de mica inaltérable et pointe de saphir extra-fin. Mouvement chronométrique de précision se remontant pendant la marche.

**Moins Cher qu'au comptant.**

Aimables Lectrices et chers Lecteurs, permettez-nous de vous offrir cet appareil incomparable, avec sa superbe collection des 130 morceaux artistiques et tous les accessoires.

**MAGASINS de VENTE et d'AUDITIONS : 47, Rue d'Enghien.**

soires, pour le prix extraordinairement réduit de 180 francs, payables avec

**un CRÉDIT de 30 MOIS**

c'est-à-dire que nous fournissons immédiatement et sans aucun paiement préalable l'appareil et la collection des disques, le tout au grand complet, et que l'acheteur ne paie que 6 fr. par mois jusqu'à complète libération du prix total de 180 francs.

L'emballage est gratuit. — Les quittances sont présentées par la poste et sans frais pour l'acheteur.

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**GIRARD & BOITTE & C<sup>ie</sup>,**  
46, Rue de l'Echiquier, Paris (X<sup>e</sup> arr.).

## 57 BULLETIN de SOUSCRIPTION

Je soussigné, déclare acheter à MM. GIRARD & BOITTE, à Paris, l'APPAREIL à DISQUES PATHÉ et la Collection des 130 Morceaux choisis sur disques double face, aux conditions énoncées, c'est-à-dire par paiements mensuels de 6 francs jusqu'à complète liquidation de la somme de 180 francs, prix total.

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Département .....

Gare .....

Prière de remplir le présent Bulletin et de l'envoyer à :

**GIRARD & BOITTE & C<sup>ie</sup>,**  
46, Rue de l'Echiquier, à PARIS (X<sup>e</sup> arr.).



# Continental Corner

Ralph Harvey

A French radio series which may be heard currently throughout the British Isles on the powerful long-wave France-Inter station (162 kHz, 1852m) from approximately 11.05pm. until midnight (GMT) five nights a week, Monday to Friday, is indispensable for all French speaking lovers of 'Classic' French popular song (1900 - 1950). "En avant la zizique" ("Forward with the Music") presented by a high-powered team of researchers and writers headed by Alain Poulanges. Each artist is treated in depth with a full appreciation of what drives him to produce what he does. If we say which artists have been covered already it will give an idea of those likely to be considered in the future.

We began with Bobby Lapointe, Boris Vian and others, followed by Francis Lemarque, Charles Aznavour, Jacques Brel, the chansonniers Francis Blanche and Pierre Dac, Mireille, Jacques Prevert and Charles Trenet. This means there are plenty more to come! Gilbert Becaud, Georges Brassens and Edith Piaf must be 'en route.' The series is likely to continue until the end of June 1993 and possibly longer.

Interviews with artists, producers and critics, unissued and private recordings, radio broadcasters and television sound-tracks are making "En avant la zizique" encyclopaedic in its proportions.

The ten Charles Trenet parts - he is now 79 - feature his much publicized French WEA album 'Mon coeur s'en vole vers toi' ('My heart flies away to you'). Its thirteen entirely new songs carried it to number one in the chart published by the newspaper *France-Soir* which lists the five top sellers each week. Not bad for a lad who received his first *Grand Prix du Disque* in the 1930s!

Trenet has plenty to say in the Poulanges interviews which reveal him in excellent form. At one point he explains how he believes his style has come full circle: from "le fou chantant" ('The Singing Fool', after Jolson, though more like a court jester) through his years as a singer-poet and now, leading to his eightieth birthday, a jester once again. So far we have no news of this Charles Trenet triumph being released or imported here, though TMR is looking out!

The style of accordion playing foreign tourists find most evocative of Paris, especially around Montmartre at night, is known as 'musette' and the musician generally considered to be its 'creator' is Emile Vacher (1883 - 1969) [SEE TMR No.79]

The French Silex label, imported by Discovery Records, The Old Mission Room, (there should be a trad jazz band named after that!) King's Corner, Pewsey, Wiltshire gives rebirth to twenty-two titles Vacher recorded for the Odeon label between 1927 and 1939. This music has to be understood in its context. It grew from the fusion of Auvergnat bagpipe ('musette' /folk music) dances and

lyrical Italian accordion Mazurkas brought to Paris by emigres. Before making its way to the fashionable Champs-Elysee and Montmartre 'musette' belonged to streets and dance-halls (*bals musette*) of down town Paris, eastwards from the Places de la Republique and La Nation to Charonne ("the last village of Paris"), Charonne, Montreuil and the valley of the River Marne. This accordion style developed, as did jazz, the tango and the Greek 'rebetika' (dropout) song alongside every form of human degradation, indietable and otherwise and only lost its way when mass-production in sheet music vast numbers of recordings allowed standards to fall.

The diatonic (button) accordion used by Emile Vacher conjures up smoke-filled dance-halls where each dance was charged individually, after the manner of Ten Cents a Dance, and where furniture was screwed to the floor in anticipation of late-night brawls.

For collectors, the records of Emile Vacher - he made over 300 titles - mean the Parlophone and Odeon labels with their £ - sign for Lindstrom, though he recorded also for Ideal and Henry with Barclay / Riviera towards the end of his life. The Silex CD unfortunately gives no catalogue or matrix (Ki for Paris) numbers, though the the catalogues are not hard to find. The booklet is in French and considerably better English than usually is the case, unsigned, but probably written by Didier Roussin, with some superb photographs.

The compositions are mostly by Emile Vacher himself, his faithful pianist Jean Peyronin and gipsy guitarist Giusti Malar.

Every title has been transferred from shellac using CEDAR. This is a work of reference for every enthusiast of the French accordion, an instrument which features so often in the recordings of singer, known simply as Frehel.

Marguerite Boulc'h (1891 - 1951) was born in Paris though her family origins were in Brittany, hence she chose the name Frehel, from Cap Frehel. Accompanied by a blind accordionist, Marguerite began singing in bars and bistros from the age of five. In later life she would say that standing on a zinc table to sing to a working-class audience at a corner cafe was as good training as any received in a Conservatoire.

Our singer made her way into the music-hall by way of being a representative for a firm selling beauty products to artistes. Marguerite made her debut at the *Brasserie de L'Univers* using the name, la Petite Pervenche (Little Periwinkle). In 1910 she married an actor who became her singing teacher. This actor introduced la Pervenche to publishers, lyric writers and composers and her career was launched. By this time la Pervenche had become Frehel. She was a singer who combined a thoroughly proletarian vocal delivery with outstanding physical beauty and magnetism giving her entry to all the great Parisian music-halls. At the same time she was soon to be a victim of drug and alcohol abuse. Legend myth and mystery surround her personal life. She left Paris for a while travelling in eastern Europe and the near East. By the time she returned she had lost her figure and her looks, so that she was much more able to be a 'realist' singer than one of 'charm'. Frehel was only sixty when she died in poverty in the rue Pigalle.

Two Chansophone compact discs cover Frehel's recordings from 1927 - 1934 (Chansophone 105) and 1926 - 1936 (Chansophone 113). Each one is documented exactly as it should be with literate notes by a first-class journalist and authority on the French 'chanson', Madame Helene Hazera of *Liberation*, complete with catalogue and matrix numbers, recording dates and timings. Basically the songs are of the 'realist' school romantic, desperate, self pitying at times, often feminist before the word was invented, though often having touches of humour many another 'realist' singer lacked.

The names of the conductors directing the accompaniments and some accordionists mentioned leave no doubt as to the quality and variety of these recordings.

On Chansophone 105 we discover Polydor's house musical director Jean Lenoir, while on Chansophone 113 we encounter the accordionists Michel Peguri, Maurice Alexander and conductors Andre Valsien and Pierre Chaguon, both of whom were 'housemen' of Columbia in Paris. Frehel was of the generation before Edith Piaf though Piaf acknowledged Maryse Damia as her 'mentor' in certain respects and appeared to dislike Frehel. Frehel was in the line of succession of 'realist' singers which began with Eugenie Buffer (1866 - 1934) and continues today with Juliette Greco and Cora Vaucaire. (see also Paris Blues : the French 'Realist' singers 1926 -1934. UK CD EMS1397. Also available on Cassette).

Satellite broadcasting from the continent is becoming more widely accepted in this country, week by week and month by month. We should be interested to have reports on this exciting medium and answer any queries readers might have, on the basis of our own recently acquired experiences in this field.

A highly recommended programme for the Francophone: 'La Chance aux Chansons' presented Monday - Friday, some time after 2 pm., depending on the racing, by Pascal Sevran on French TV channel F2, (formerly known as Antenne2).

RALPH HARVEY

## Letters

from Mrs P Appleyard, The Old Cottage, Grey Court, Glenhowe Lane, Leeds, LS8 1NQ

Sir,

I am trying to obtain two spoken word recordings of the work of Emily Dickens. One issued by Cademon Records, catalogue number 1119, "The Letters of Emily Dickens" read by Julie Harris; the other issued in the USA during 1976 by Credo of Cambridge Mass. is a double Lp set "The Life of Emily Dickens" a play by Emily Luce, I believe this was deleted as recently as 1990.

Can any other readers please help me obtain these records for my Godmother who is now in her eighties?

Sincerely,

from Malcolm J Webb, 15 Garforth Road, Keighley, West Yorkshire, BD21 4DR

Dear John,

I am looking for information on 2 minute cylinders. I have inherited a boxfull of cylinders and very interesting they are too but not very jazzy, which is not surprising, well being a New Orleans style trombone player and collector of jazz records, I thought it might be a good idea to have some cylinders with names associated with jazz, ie At a Georgia Camp Meeting, Whistling Rufus, Creole Belles, Hiawatha Smokey Mokes etc. But after trying a couple of dealers/ collectors it seems that these are difficult to come by. Do you know of anyone who may have anything in this line for sale? Anything would do banjo, brass or military band anything a bit lively.

Regards,

## Diary

### January

10th Flea market, CHATHAM. Mid Kent College, Maidstone Rd. CHATHAM Kent (opposite the airport). Gramophones, radios, records appear here regularly. This is a large event. Details: (0634) 719093.  
24th \* Gramophone and Record fair, Lijbaanhal, Vlaardingen, ROTTERDAM. K. Bouman, 010-4352595.

### February

7th \* The record bazaar, Stadium Grandstand Lounge, Plough Lane, WIMBLEDON London SW17. Details: F Wilkinson, (0689) 846516.  
14th Flea market, CHATHAM. Details as 10th January

### March

14th \* BIRMINGHAM Record Bazaar, National Motorcycle Museum, Brickhill (see advert in this issue), Derek Spruce (0923) 237794  
14th Flea market, CHATHAM. Details as 10th January  
21st \* Gramophone and Record Fair, Fairfield Halls, CROYDON. Details: Jo or Michael (0732) 863955 or 081 660 0407 (See advert in this issue).

### April

11th Flea market, CHATHAM. Details as 10th January  
24th \* CLPGS Phonofair, Fairfield School, Trinity Avenue, NORTHAMTON. Details: Ruth Lambert, (0604) 405184.

25th \* The record bazaar, Stadium Grandstand Lounge, Plough Lane, WIMBLEDON London SW17. Details: F Wilkinson, (0689) 846516.  
25th NEWARK (NEW JERSEY) USA Sale of phonographs, automata, records etc. Holiday Inn North, Newark, NJ USA. Details: Lynn Bilton, Box 25007, Chicago IL 60625 USA, (216) 758-5001

### May

2nd \* The National Vintage Communications Fair, National Exhibition Centre, BIRMINGHAM. Records, Radios, 405-line TV, Gramophones, Vintage audio, Juke Boxes etc., Details: Jonathan Hill, (0398) 331532. (See advert p 2408)  
9th Flea market, CHATHAM. Details as 10th January

### July

4th \* The record bazaar, Stadium Grandstand Lounge, Plough Lane, WIMBLEDON London SW17. Details: F Wilkinson, (0689) 846516.  
11th \* BIRMINGHAM Record Bazaar, National Motorcycle Museum, Brickhill (see advert in this issue), Derek Spruce (0923) 237794

11th Flea market, CHATHAM. Details as 10th January

### September

12th \* The record bazaar, Stadium Grandstand Lounge, Plough Lane, WIMBLEDON London SW17. Details: F Wilkinson, (0689) 846516.

12th Flea market, CHATHAM. Details as 10th January

26th \* Gramophone and Record Fair, Fairfield Halls, CROYDON. Details: Jo or Michael (0732) 863955 or 081 660 0407 (See advert in this issue).

26th NEWARK (NEW JERSEY) USA Sale of phonographs, automata, records etc. Holiday Inn North, Newark, NJ USA. Details: Lynn Bilton Box 25007, Chicago IL 60625 USA, (216) 758-5001

### October

10th \* BIRMINGHAM Record Bazaar, National Motorcycle Museum, Brickhill (see advert in this issue), Derek Spruce (0923) 237794

10th Flea market, CHATHAM. Details as 10th January

24th \* CLPGS Midlands 25th Anniversary Phonofair, probably in WALSALL or WOLVERHAMPTON. (No further details available at present)

### November

14th Flea market, CHATHAM. Details as 10th January

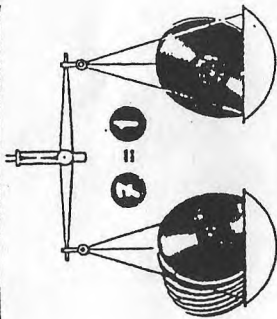
### December

5th \* The record bazaar, Stadium Grandstand Lounge, Plough Lane, WIMBLEDON London SW17. Details: F Wilkinson, (0689) 846516.  
12th Flea market, CHATHAM. Details as 10th January

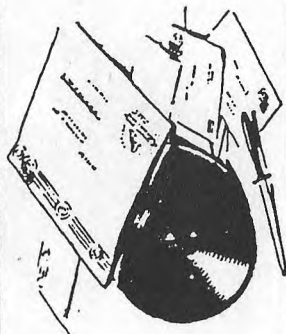
\* Indicates planned attendance of TMR Sales Desk. E&OE.



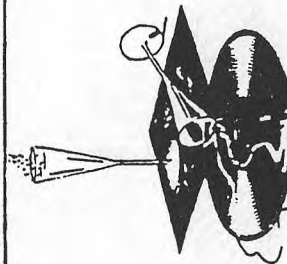
## Äußere Vorteile der PHONYCORD-FLEXIBLE-Schallplatte



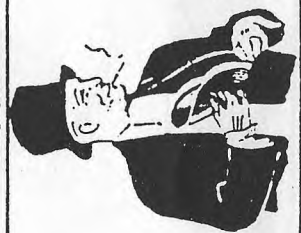
Sieben PHONYCORD-FLEXIBLE wiegen nur so viel wie eine Schellackplatte. Bedenken Sie wie vorteilhaft das ist, wenn Sie mit Ihrem Kofforparat ins Wochenende fahren wollen.



Als Doppelbrief versandt bringt die PHONYCORD-FLEXIBLE Freude in jedes Haus. Sie können lieben Verwandten oder Freunden auf diese Weise eine schöne Geburtstagsüberraschung bereiten.



Es macht auch nichts aus, wenn durch einen Zufall bei der Feier Wein oder Bier über die Platte gegossen wird. Die PHONYCORD-FLEXIBLE ist gegen Feuchtigkeit unempfindlich.



Die PHONYCORD-FLEXIBLE ist biegsam. Sie können die Platte ohne Gefahr in eine weite Manteltasche stecken oder im Koffer unter anderen Dingen transportieren.



# PHONYCORD FLEXIBLE

die  
unzerbrechliche, biegsame  
Qualitäts-Schallplatte

\*

Kein Zelluloid  
Für Postversand zugelassen

Farbig \* Durchsichtig \* Wasserfest  
Hitzeunempfindlich \* Federleicht  
Fast kein Nadelgeräusch \* Elektrisch  
aufgenommen \* Größte Tonreinheit

Dieses Verzeichnis enthält alle bis zum August 1930  
ersienenen Platten.



## PHONYCORD - WINKEL-NADEL „SPEZIAL“

(ges. gesch.)

Die Phonycord - Winkel - Nadeln „Spezial“ kommen in 2 verschiedenen Winkelungen in den Handel und zwar unter der Bezeichnung

## Phonycord-Winkel-Nadel „Silber“ Phonycord-Winkel-Nadel „Gold“

(gelb) für steil stehende Schalllosen.

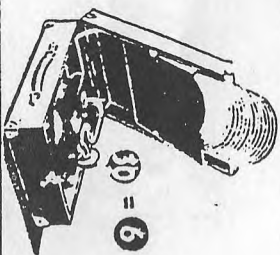
Der Preis ist für beide Sorten gleich. Wir bitten dies bei der Bestellung zu beachten.

Bei Verwendung der richtigen Phonycord-Winkel - Nadel ist eine Beschädigung der Phonycord - Platten von vornherein ausgeschlossen.

Schonen Sie Ihre Platten durch die Verwendung von Phonycord - Winkel - Nadeln.

## Äußere Vorzüge. der PHONYCORD-FLEXIBLE-Schallplatte

Fünf PHONYCORD-FLEXIBLE sind so stark wie eine Schellackplatte. In Ihrem Kofferraum findet ein Konzertprogramm für einen ganzen Tag Platz.

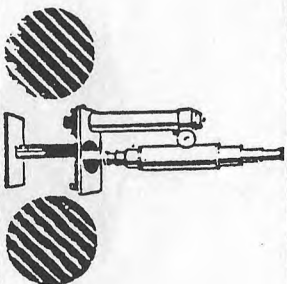


Auch durchsichtig ist das farbenfrohe Material. Es hat einen besonderen Reiz, eine Sammlung von PHONYCORD-FLEXIBLE-Platten mit ihrer das Auge erfreuenden Bunttheit zu besitzen.

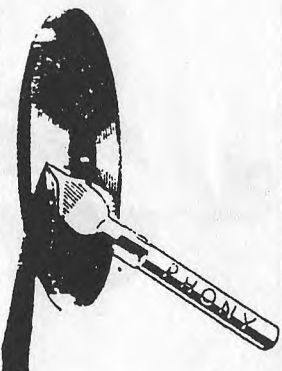
Kein Zelluloid.



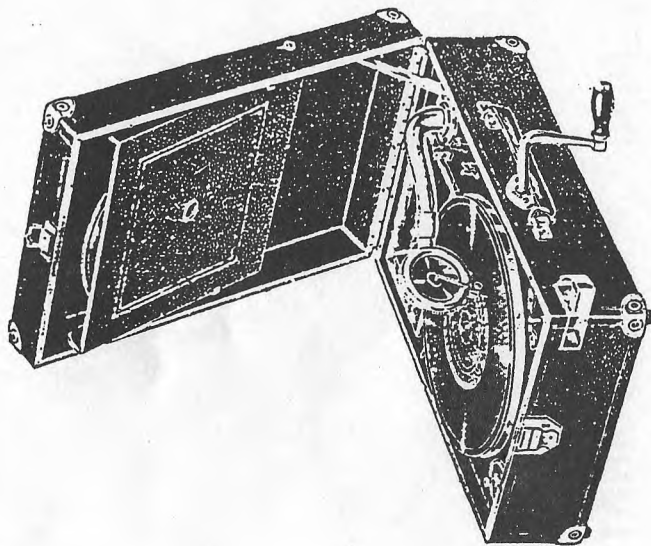
Die PHONYCORD-FLEXIBLE hat eine lange Lebensdauer. Lesen Sie das Gintatien auf der Seite 2. Es besagt, daß nach 500-maligem Spiel, bei mikroskopischer Untersuchung keine Abnutzung festgestellt werden konnte.



Aber zum Schluß noch einmal: Spielen Sie die PHONYCORD-FLEXIBLE nur mit der silberpolierten Winkelnadel. Das bedeutet keine Mißrausgabe, denn auch andere Platten können Sie damit spielen.







## PHONYCORD- KOFFERAPPARAT Mod. II

**Gehäuse:** 41X28,5X14,5 cm, mit farbigem Kunstlederbezug und hochglanzvernickelten Beschlägen. Im Deckel Plattenfach zur Aufnahme von ca. 40 Phonycord-Schallplatten.

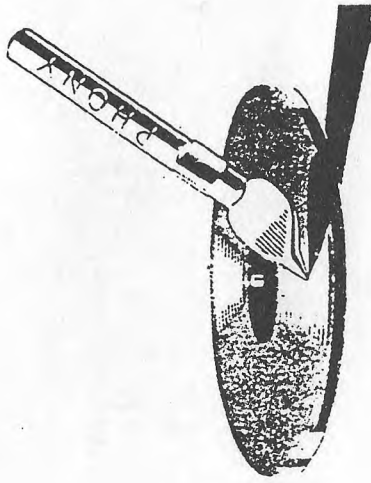
**Laufwerk:** Starkes Einfeder-Schneckenwerk mit Schrägaufzug, zwei Plattenseiten 25 cm Durchmesser durchspielend.

**Tonführung:** Große Electri-Konzert-Schalldose, Schlangentonarm, Saxophontonführung.

**Plattenteller:** 25 cm, mit Nickelrand, Hebelbremse, seitlicher Nadelbecher, Tabulator.

**Gewicht:** netto 5,8 kg.

**Codewort:** duo



## PHONYCORD-WINKEL-NADELN „STARKTON“

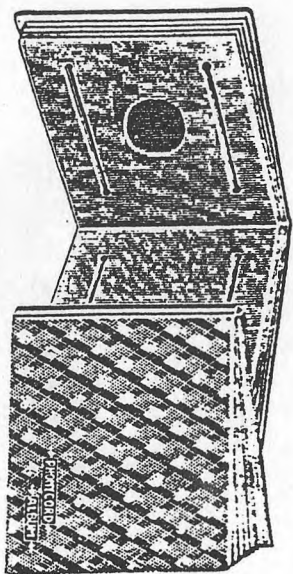
ges. gesch.

Diese neue Nadel wurde auf Wunsch vieler Phonycord-Freunde fabriziert.

Die Vorzüge der Nadel sind besondere Lautstärke und volle runde Tongebung.

Bei Verwendung der richtigen Phonycord-Winkel-Nadel ist eine Beschädigung der Phonycord-Platten von vornherein ausgeschlossen.

Schonen Sie Ihre Platten durch die Verwendung von Phonycord-Winkel-Nadeln.



## PHONYCORD-SCHALLPLATTEN- SPEZIAL-ALBUM

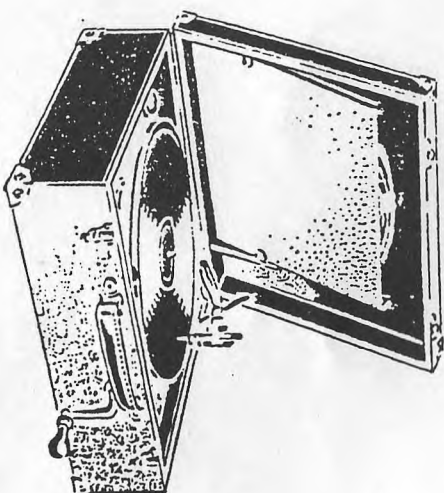
(gesetzlich geschützt)

Fester Einband mit 16 bis 50  
Blättern zum Einstecken der  
Phonycord-Flexible-Schallplat-  
ten. Umschlag, Halb- oder Ganz-  
leinen, feinfarbig oder bunt mit  
Prägung.

Album Nr. 5 für 16 Platten 25 cm Durchm. Halbleinen  
Album Nr. 8 für 24 Platten 25 cm Durchm. Halbleinen  
Album Nr. 10 für 24 Platten 25 cm Durchm. Ganzleinen  
Album Nr. 13 für 50 Platten 25 cm Durchm. Ganzleinen

\*

Unentbehrlich zum Aufbewahren der  
Phonycord-Flexible-Platten.



## PHONYCORD-

### WEEKEND-KOFFERAPPARAT Mod. I

Gehäuse: 38 x 29 x 14,5 cm, mit hoch-  
glanzvernickelten Beschlägen.  
Im Deckel Befestigungsschraube  
für Platten.

Laufwerk: Einfeld-Schneckenwerk.

Tonführung: Konzertschalldose,  
Schlangentonarm, Metallton-  
führung.

Plattenteller: 25 cm, mit Nickelrand,  
Hebelbremse, Tabulator.

Gewicht: netto 5,3 kg.

Codewort: uno



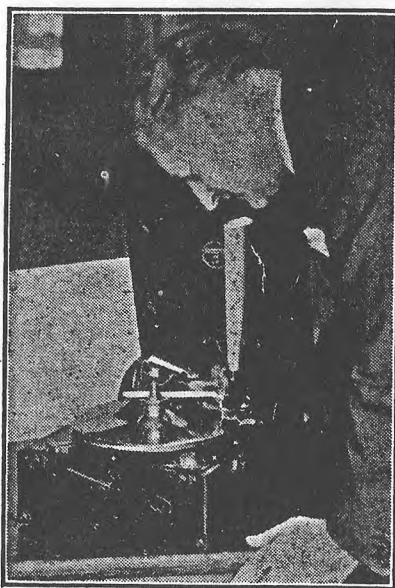
# More about ... ..

## Fay Home Recorders

In TMR 80 (page 2351) we published a photograph of a "Faytone" Home Recording attachment. Thanks to Barry Simcoe of Kettering, we have further details of these devices. We assume that the illustration below, taken from a disc wrapper, shows Mr Fay using his device, clearly shown is a Columbia portable and the metal recording disc.



## "Fay" Home Recorders



*Manufacturers and Distributors :*

**"FAY" HOME RECORDERS, Ltd.,**  
**121, VICTORIA STREET, WESTMINSTER, S.W. 1.**

Phone : VICTORIA 7784 & 5.  
 Telegraphic Code : A.B.C.

*Agent :*

Telegraphic Address :  
**"FAYEDISK, SOWEST, LONDON."**

We have also seen a photograph, unfortunately unsuitable for reproduction, of The Meltrope Tracking Unit. Issued in 1936 this item, which sold for 12/6d, appears to be virtually identical to the Fay unit above. Sold by Amplifiers Ltd., of Billet Road, Walthamstow, London E17, the advertising 'copy' said: "The success of Home Recording depends almost entirely upon the efficiency of the tracking unit. This Meltrope Model, designed and tested with meticulous care, can be relied on to produce the best results."

# More about ...

## The Fay tone Home Recorder

### THE ART OF HOME RECORDING

If you follow the recording instructions of the "Fay" Home Recorder every record you make will be a great success.

It is our aim to give you inside information of the correct way of sound recording, so that there will be less wasted discs and more pleasure.

#### SOUND IS CAUSED BY VIBRATIONS.

The "Fay" Home Recorders are the only practical and perfect way Home Recorders which have a sound wall of 6/1,000ths of an inch between each groove, thus enabling you to obtain a truer recording than can be obtained by the standard system.

The range of the average human ear is roughly from 50 to 6,000 vibrations per second.

It is obvious that if you are recording a sound pitch of 1,000 vibrations per second, and assuming that the stylus travels round the track at the rate of three feet per second there will be 330 vibrations impressed upon every foot of the track. In the same way if the sound has a frequency of 90 there will be 30 impressions per foot of the track.

The variations of of air pressure which we know as sound waves are of very complex nature. When analysed those corresponding to the simplest word or even a vowel are found to have a very complicated wave form.

There are many ways in which a visible record of the form of air vibrations of any given sound can be obtained, one way being of a record being played slowly and the motion of the needle magnified by lever action and recorded by means of a lead stylus on paper. In this way the wave forms of many different sounds can be studied, for instance the "a" in the word "far."

Now your problem is how to make a complete record without getting any of these frequencies distorted or even lost completely.

When recording with the "Fay" Home Recorder it is quite an easy problem calling more for the display of care and common sense rather than any great technical skill—All those technical errors which have to be watched in standard recording are eliminated.

You should, for instance, in view of the few facts that I have just given above about the frequency of sound waves, realise that the cutting stylus has a good deal of work to do, on the average it performs nearly 60,000 vibrations per minute, and to get the best results from your work you should assist the cutting stylus in the execution of its duties by watching the following points.

Always observe great cleanliness in handling the "Faytone" Recording Discs. After placing them on the turn table clean with cleaning pad and see that the cutting point of the stylus is free from grit or dust.

#### IMPORTANT.

Use "Faytone" NEEDLES, for they are made especially for home recording and standard records.

#### NOW FOR ELECTRICAL RECORDING.

Your Amplifier contains no internal wires, therefore eliminating all possibility of loose connections, broken joints, etc.

The "Faytone" Amplifier is the only amplifier which is fool-proof and is made especially for home recording purposes.

This Amplifier is capable of giving undistorted reproduction and has more than sufficient power for either recording or reproducing.

The extra power is provided so that faint sounds can be recorded with ample power.

It is advisable not to use the full power when either recording or reproducing sounds of normal intensity.

The best position of the volume control for both purposes will be found for recording by a very little practice and for reproducing by the quality of the tone.

While the electrical recording system is more delicate than the Acoustic Model, excellent results can be obtained providing that care is taken and only "Faytone" apparatus used.

It is very essential that the best type of Microphone be used.

The "Faytone" Microphone is especially made for home and standard recording of dictation, vocal, instrumental, or orchestral music.

It is a complete unit comprising the Microphone Transformer and battery with an "on and off" switch on the Microphone. This Microphone can be used on any standard radio set, and will give perfect results.

The "Faytone" Electrical Recording Pick-up is made especially for recording and reproducing. It is capable of handling the whole of the important part of the harmonic scale.

If you follow these instructions when using the "Fay" Home Recorder, whether it is the Acoustic, Radio or Superior Model, you will get perfectly recorded discs.

It is also essential to use the "Faytone" RECORDING DISCS, as they are made of a special alloy, which absorbs and holds the sound and will outplay the standard record.

Do not use any other Microphone or Pick-up or Amplifier than "Faytone" because each part is made to work in unison.

The above Article is written by Mr. H. P. FAY, of "Fay" Home Recorders Ltd., and all rights of reproduction are reserved by him.

Reproduced from the original



# Obituary to 208

## “The Station of the Stars”

RADIO LUXEMBOURG like many other stars of the past has had two farewell performances. The penultimate was on 31 December 1991 as the famous ‘wavelength’ of 208 metres was vacated by the English language service retreating to the Astra satellite. However this was but a respite as due to the lack of advertising revenue it finally closed down on 30th December 1992.

The medium wave length of 208 metres (1442 Khz) was reactivated for a final day of broadcasting on 30th December 1992 before being reallocated away from the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

Radio Luxembourg was established in 1933 in the English language with the first regular programmes going out on Long Wave 1191 metres from Sunday 4th June. Presenting a more popular fare than the puritanical regime of Sir John Reith's BBC Sunday service. As Richard Nicols in his book ‘Radio Luxembourg, The Station Of The Stars’ wrote: “The BBC ... clearly believed that if God had meant people to have radio then they would have been British.” Throughout 1933 Radio Luxembourg continued to broadcast to Britain on Sundays only operating on a long wave frequency, usually in the 1200 metres band, but without any sponsorship or advertising as yet.

January 1934 saw Radio Luxembourg switch to 1304 metres Long Wave with 200 Kilowatts of power, against all international conventions, which seemingly were stitched up by Britain and other countries in ‘an anti-commercialism stance. Although there may well have been an anti-propaganda stance on an hidden agenda.

Radio Luxembourg suffered from an almost total blanket embargo on publicity from the ‘establishment’ in Britain including all of the daily newspapers. At that time all programmes originated in Britain from a company based in London, International Broadcasting Co., Ltd. at 11, Hallam Street, Portland Place, London, W.1. (very close to site of the BBC's Broadcasting House), recorded onto 16inch transcription discs, they were flown out to Luxembourg via Brussels for presentation over the air, in a manner closer to today's styles of broadcasting than that of the BBC of the time.

Christopher Stone was one of the earliest presenters to suffer from a BBC employment ban after recording some programmes for Radio Luxembourg. This ban prevented many stars from appearing on IBC recorded programmes for Radio Luxembourg. Reacting to BBC pressure the British Phonographic Industry (BPI) levy for broadcasting commercially released recordings was increased to Ten shillings (10s.) per play. At about this time Radio Luxembourg invested in the Western Electric film sound system, (the Electric Light Ray of Brunswick recordings),

as used by Radio Normandie, to have concert length programmes recorded by Gaumont British.

In the thirties many famous British companies were advertising on Radio Luxembourg, including Beecham's Pills (the family firm connected with Sir Thomas Beecham), Littlewood's Pools, and internationals such as Palmolive and Shredded Wheat, who no doubt wished to emulate their US successes in broadcasting.

As the station went from strength to strength its connections with the record industry, or its stars, increased. Jack Payne, Gracie Fields, and Jack Jackson (of whom more later) were all broadcast. The station also put out record request programmes, playing what the listeners asked for, not what Auntie BBC wanted them to hear.

In 1936 Captain Plugge, Member of Parliament for the Medway Towns, (Gillingham, Chatham and Rochester in Kent) was informed by Radio Luxembourg that his IBC company had lost the concession to sell advertising for the station. He was still connected with Radio Normandie, Radio Toulouse, Radio Lyons and Poste Parisienne all stations beaming ‘commercial’ programmes to England from France. The new operator was Wireless Publicity Ltd, a close affiliate of Radio Luxembourg. This also precipitated the loss of the Western Electric film system, which was replaced by a newer film system from Phillips-Miller in Holland. Operated in the main by advertising agency J Walter Thompson from their own studios then in Bush House, London, (now the home of BBC External Services) this marked a milestone in the professionalism of the programming from Radio Luxembourg. Frank Lee joined J W T from Decca in 1935 until 1937 when he transferred to the Graham & Gillies Agency and produced the ‘Bob Martin’ (Dog Powder) programme starring Mabel Constanduras and Jeanne de Casalis. Lee became General Manager of Radio Luxembourg (London) after WWII.

Many US artists were booked to appear on Radio Luxembourg during their British tours, British dance bands were regularly heard - Jack Payne on a programme sponsored by Beecham's Pills, Debroy Sommers with the Horlick's Teatime Hour, Billy Cotton (Kraft Cheese), Sidney Lipton, and Marius B Winter also made programmes. Their appearances and playing of their latest recorded numbers to an estimated audience of some four million without doubt boosted sales of both the sheet music and records.

Radio Luxembourg closed down at 13.19 on 21st September 1939 for commercial operations.

Of the wartime use made of the station by Dr Josef Goebbels' propaganda broadcaster William (‘Lord Haw-Haw’) Joyce, little needs to said.

Radio Luxembourg was liberated virtually intact by the American 12th Army Group on 10th September 1944. From then on until November 1945 Radio Luxembourg beamed a mixture of Allied instructions and propaganda interspersed with programmes from the American Office of War Information in New York and the BBC in London.

On 12th November 1945 Radio Luxembourg reopened commercial operations in French with the normal opener of “*Bonjour le monde, ici Radio Luxembourg*”. The English language service did not restart until 1st July 1946, using material hidden from the occupying army

throughout the war in Luxembourg.

Early programmes in the late forties were very much like the pre-war material, Sunday afternoons had transmissions by Cyril Stapleton, his band and The Stapletons vocal quartet, Carrol Gibbons and his orchestra were still broadcasting in 1950 in a programme sponsored by Colgate, but changes were on the way. Not least of these was the employment of band leader Jack Jackson as a disc jockey in a programme for Mars Bars. Anyone who heard his programmes will surely never forget his call of "Oooh, it's Saturday!" in a format transferred from his BBC programme, or of his later programme format based on the possibilities opened up by the advance of the tape recorder, (and which he successfully sold subsequently to the BBC) of records interspersed with sound-bites taken from other recordings, usually comedy spoken word material, and presented as a running comic gag.

Decca Records programmes pioneered by Bill Townsley (Executive Director of Decca) changed the way that record companies regarded radio in Britain, instead of the broadcaster buying records, here was the record publisher buying airtime to promote the latest recordings.

On Monday July 2nd 1951 the English language programmes were taken off the Long Wave transmitter and replaced by a Medium Wavelength of 208 metres.

With the growing population of teenagers in the nineteen fifties came a new audience for Radio Luxembourg's evening broadcasts. Consumer goods were only just beginning to reappear after post-war austerity, advertisers needed an audience still denied them in Britain.



Disc jockeys arrived at 208, Pete Murray, Teddy Johnson, and Jack Jackson. Decca Records led the way with the sponsored disc airtime programme, and their jingle of "D-E-C-C-A Dec-ca" sung in the tonic sol fa scale.

Many famous stars and artistes came over the air on 208, to name but a few: Beryl Reid, Dickie Murdoch, Sam Costa, Keith Fordyce, Alan Freed (of US 'payola' notoriety), Winifred Atwell, Jimmy Young, Jimmy (now Sir James) Saville (OBE), Jo Stafford (Mondays at 9.15pm), Alan Freeman (relief announcer in the summer and just retired from the BBC this year), Kent Walton, David Jacobs and Vera Lynn. Radio Luxembourg was the record industry's saviour, for some records that had been 'banned' by the BBC were made popular by simply plugging them on 208. David Whitfield's October 1953 hit recording of 'Answer Me' (Decca F 10192) is a - surprising - prime example. A personal memory of mine is as a youngster hearing Paul Anka's 'Diana' (Columbia DB 3980) during the summer holidays of 1957, when it became a number one in the New Musical Express Top Twenty chart solely as a result of Radio Luxembourg exposure to its UK audience of nearly 9 million who listened to "Luxie" - and the notorious 208 fading despite an increased transmitter power of 300 kilowatts.

As the BBC lost its monopoly position with the introduction of an independent commercially operated television network in the mid to late fifties, Radio Luxembourg's audience figures began to fall. ITV was producing TV programmes aimed at a younger market who wanted Rock 'n' Roll, Skiffle, and other popular music. The very presenters of which were drawn mainly from the ranks of Radio Luxembourg DJs. At this time to preserve revenue Radio Luxembourg accepted programmes from evangelist Billy Graham, latter to be followed by someone called, if my memory and hearing were correct, Garner Ted Armstrong. I find it hard to chose between the two for the highest boredom factor.

The programmes continued otherwise starting at seven o'clock in the evening until around one or two in the morning. (I have always thought that Radio Luxembourg missed out by not being able to transmit in English in the daytime at weekends, especially before the offshore pirates opened up). Mainly a mix of record programmes plugging the latest releases from Decca, Capitol, Columbia, Pye, Top Rank, Warner Brothers and EMI. Needle time then, as now, limited the amount of non-live music that the BBC could broadcast (then 24 hours per week over three channels). BBC ethics also dictated the number of plays given to a specific title (and with a large number of British cover versions this was very limiting). So what better way round these limits than for each record label to buy their own air time? In 1958 EMI made payments of around £45,000 for sponsored airtime on 208. And for the benefit of our US readers, it was all legal, not regarded as payola - well not quite; at least the listener knew to which record label the programme belonged to. And he (or she) was able to make his or her own choice of what they wanted to buy from the local record dealers after hearing it on Radio Luxembourg. Just because it was played on 208 did not automatically make it a hit, but it helped.

If anyone person was the voice of 208 it was Australian Barry Aldiss. With his slightly accented voice (less so than the Aussie 'soap' TV performers of today) he brought a seemingly transatlantic tone to the station of the stars. Perhaps one of his

best remembered shows was *Smash Hits*, in which he played listeners' requested hate records, and purported to smash the record after playing it.

By the end of the fifties the station had become a non-stop pop music station which was what the audience wanted. After all the variety theatres were dying out and that audience had started to become a nation of couch potatoes, with all the variety artists on TV.

Radio Luxembourg on 208 and the growth of Pop music in Britain were synonymous. EMI had a show on Monday evenings called *Monday Spectacular*. This was recorded at Manchester Square in front of an audience, who were treated to performances (often mimed) and interviews by EMI artists. EMI also produced a dancing programme, whereas Victor Sylvester was catering for the strict tempo school, *Dance Party* with Alan Dell and Muriel Young aimed to teach teenagers the steps to the latest dances. It seemed as if a new dance appeared with every record! The Beatles first airing was, of course, on Radio Luxembourg in 1963. Their subsequent history is not for these pages and needs no retelling.

The pop revolution had begun and Radio Luxembourg 208 stayed on air until 3am each day, long after Auntie BBC had gone to bed. The 208 signal was audible all throughout northern Europe, usually better reception was to be had in Scotland or Scandinavia, than in Kent or even Luxembourg itself. This was to be of significance to the clutch of off shore 'pirate' radio stations such as Radio Caroline, Radio London, and the best one of all, Radio 390, as they broadcast later in the 'sixties from ships anchored off the south east of England or from abandoned forts outside territorial waters off the Kent coast.

As a result of Radio Luxembourg's performance in broadcasting British pop music and news of the record industry in the late 'fifties and early 'sixties Barry Aldiss was awarded a special Gold Disc by the Norwegian magazine *Det Nye* in 1965.

Radio Luxembourg often felt that despite being denied



access to a landline link between the London offices and the Luxembourg transmission facilities they coped better than could have been expected, except in the field of news coverage. Many listeners, shared my belief at the time that this was a complete advantage to 208, especially when the BBC introduced news on the hour every hour, a feature that I still do not agree with; —"If you want news find a news station, if you want music find a music station." And 208 was certainly that.

The silencing of the 'pirates' by The Marine Offences Act 1967, created BBC Radio One, a land based version of Radio London cum Caroline, and the greatest potential threat to Radio Luxembourg on 208. But unlike the 'pirates' Radio One went off the air in the evenings and broadcast Radio Two programmes until about 11.30pm. 208 had it all to themselves again.

In 1968 Radio Luxembourg embarked upon a change of format to face the challenge of Pop music on the BBC. 'Live' programmes, ie DJs working self drive equipment, largely replaced the pre-recorded format of sponsored programmes, and thus the close ties between the British record industry, the performers and Radio Luxembourg began to fade away. So it remained until 208's first demise on the 31 December 1991. And of course the pop record 'music' had changed out of all recognition, due to factors raised within the business itself: 'Punk' and later the video revolution. Radio Luxembourg by now Radio Television Luxembourg (RTL) had interests in non terrestrial broadcasting through its holdings in the Astra Satellite. So it was inevitable that Radio Luxembourg would move from 208 metres. However in this day and age of a Europe *sans frontieres*, its seems ironic that one of the first trans national broadcast stations should be a victim of local low powered broadcasting.

'Luxie' has faded for the last time, bye bye 208.

JOHN W BOOTH

# Obituary

## Theodore Edison

THEODORE EDISON the youngest of Thomas Edison's children died at his home in West Orange, New Jersey, USA on 24th November 1992, aged 94.

He was the last direct link with the Edison Laboratories, his brother Charles, half brothers (Thomas Jnr. and William), half sister Marion and his own children having all predeceased him. He graduated with a degree in physics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1923. No mean inventor and philanthropist, he assumed control of Edison's research laboratories upon the death of his father in 1931, he later established his own research company.

EMI Archives have announced two new reproduction full colour posters from 1908. The originals were commissioned for the German branch and are headed 'Grammophon'. Priced at £5.50 per pair including UK postage they are printed on glossy art paper size 19" x 11½" and can be ordered direct from— EMI Music Archives 1/3 Uxbridge Road, Hayes, UB4 0SY, please mention this magazine when ordering.

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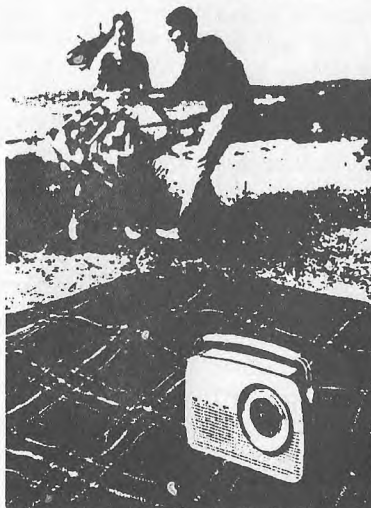
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# Other magazines received ....

THE NEW AMBEROLA GRAPHIC issue 82 (Autumn 92) contains a wealth of information, some of it original, some recycled, the most important articles in Martin F Bryan's latest issue are four large photographs of Blue Amberol cylinder pressing machinery at the Edison plant, and a contribution by Ray Wile of some letters from the Edison archives dated early 1939 in which discussion takes place of the possibility of the Edison Company re-entering the record market using the existing stock of masters. [See a review in this issue of a release of Edison Laterals on CD]. There is a corporate mini-history of the American Record Corporation (ARC) and its labels—US Columbia, Emerson, US Brunswick and the 'famous five' chain store labels—Perfect, Romeo, Oriole, Banner and Melotone, plus a footnote about Conqueror (Sears, Roebuck & Co.'s, label).

DER WEERGEVER from Amsterdam has an in-depth article and extensive discography by Ben Poelman about operatic star Jo Vincent.

HILLANDALE NEWS for December 1992 leads with an article by Christopher Proudfoot concerning an anonymous table top portable gramophone. In which he admits some defeat as to establishment of provenance. Fascinating stuff for machine collectors. And still the argument rages over the Queen Vic cylinder!

Ross Laird has launched INTERNATIONAL DISCOGRAPHER, an addition to the ranks of magazines concerning the early history of the industry. He states that his intention is to document as many different aspects of the activity of the early record industry as possible - preferably those which haven't already been covered in sufficient detail (or at all) elsewhere.

It is intended that issues will appear two/three times a year dealing with discographical matter in depth. Contributing editors are listed as Rainer Lotz, Brian Rust and Dick Spottswood. Subscriptions to this latest venture are quoted in US Dollars as \$25.00 (individuals), \$45.00 (institutions) for surface mailings. The current address is Box 197 Dickson, ACT 2602, Australia; Ross tells us that he is due to move to Hong Kong in January 1993, and will be operating from there but with mail forwarded to him from Australia, so if you see either address for the title you are assured by him that your letters will get to him.

The first issue is A4 format (the same page size as this one) and 80 pages thick, including a page of four full colour record labels (presumably colour photocopied) from World Records and Condor record (in support of an article on this unusual constant speed system of Noel Pemberton-Billing), plus Chappell and Boosey & Hawkes both mood music labels. There is an article, somewhat lacking in completeness, about mood music labels. Other articles are the first part of a listing of Columbia (US) 15000-D series, a listing of Capitol (US) 57-70000 Sepia series and from Rainer Lotz a history of Pete Hampton, Laura Bowman and the Darktown Aristocrats in Europe 1904-12.

VINTAGE LIGHT MUSIC MAGAZINE from The Vintage Light Music Society in the Winter 1993 issue has a short article on the "Trio Nuovo" by Max Drew and a short discography by Jim Hayes. This trio recorded on Regal in the early 'twenties and is likely to have included Billy Whitlock. This issue also has a plea for information about a Jack Leonardi, he played in the Alfredo band before going to Bournemouth in 1937 to form his own band there prior to the war. VLM is obtainable from Stuart Upton, VLMS, 4 Harvest Bank Road, West Wickham, Kent.

MAPS newsletter IN THE GROOVE, from Michigan provides a regular monthly read, and in the December issue is the Third Edison Report by Ron Dethlefsen, this has two very fine full page pictures of the Edison Columbia Street Studio with the famous outside recording horn tunnel and recording 'shack', shown both interior and exterior. MAPS address for membership is: John Whitacre, 2609 Devonshire, Lansing, MI 48910, USA.

Devotees of Ralph Harvey's Continental Corner in TMR may like to learn of a series of discographies published in French and dedicated to La Chanson Francaise. Titled JE CHANTE ! covering histories and interviews with artistes and stories of the chanson both modern and earlier, it is available six times a year from 36-44, rue de Wattignies, 75012 Paris, France. Price within France is 200.FFr. You will have to enquire direct for overseas rates. Past issues have included discographies on Cora Vaucaire, Nicole Louvier, and many others are planned for the future. Contributors include TMR reader Michel Gosselin and renown expert on the chanson - Christian Plume (to whom the editor of TMR listens regularly via Radio Bleue.).

ANTIQUÉ PHONOGRAPH MONTHLY in issue 88 has a follow-up article written by Michael Sherman regarding the transition from Berliner discs to the early Victors. The first article by Tim Brooks appeared in APM for June-July 1975! APM, Allen Koenigsberg, 502 East 17th street, Brooklyn, NY 1226 USA. \$18.50 subscription outside USA.

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# BOOK REVIEWS

The Arkivet for Ljud och Bild of Stockholm continues its valuable and important task of publishing listings of 78 rpm records issued in Sweden. The latest two received for review are Swedish Parlophon 1927 to 1933; and Swedish Odeon 1926 to 1934; both compiled by Bjorn Englund.

Each is accompanied with a tape cassette with examples of the music contained within the catalogue. The Parlophon is of 140 pages and lists all 589 Swedish issues of 1927 until 1933 when the label ceased to exist in Sweden. There is a complete master number listing, artist index, title index, list of composer/lyricist, pseudonyms and a listing of the studios used as well as the names or initials of the recording engineers. Operatic singers are covered equally as is the popular music of the day. Recording dates are given. The Odeon catalogue is of 300 pages.

Access was given to the Lindstrom company archive so details are equally complete for both catalogues. Many of the Swedish recordings appeared on Odeon, Okeh, Decca and Parlophone in several countries throughout the world and these catalogue numbers are also included. The Odeon cassette includes a previously unissued recording by Swedish opera singer Irma Bjorck. Because of the interweaving of Lindstrom material into the catalogue of several nations these two catalogues are invaluable for research outside Sweden, especially as most recordings were taken in the main studios in Berlin. It is thus possible to approximate dates of recordings in your collection if you have no other means. Both books are highly recommended.

**Prices:** The Parlophone is 150 Sw.Kr. plus 23.50 Sw.Kr. postage for Europe (for book and cassette) and 27.00 Sw.Kr. airmail or 17.50 Sw.Kr. surface mail to the rest of the world. The Odeon is 250 Sw.Kr. plus 25.00 Sw.Kr. postage for Europe, or 35.00 Sw.Kr. for the rest of the world (including cassette).

Payment should be made by International Money Order, or by Giro into the ALB account number: 788133-7. The address is Arkivet for Ljud och Bild, Box 7371, 10391, Stockholm, Sweden.  
ERNE BAYLY

**Trumpet Records: An illustrated History With Discography.** Marc Ryan Big Nickel Publications, PO Box 157 Milford New Hampshire 03055 USA 114pp Limp Covers 210mm x 2320mm. 1992 ISBN 0-936433-1-0

I have never before taken to reading a discography and company history at bedtime, but Marc Ryan's writing is so compulsive that I found it difficult to put down this book having once started to read it for review.

The story of Trumpet Records is the story of one woman's attempt at becoming a record publisher in Jackson, Missouri. Lillian McMurry decided to sell records from a furniture store in 1949. One year later she booked studio time after hours at WRBC in Jackson to record a gospel group. From this start she went on to record others, including blues artists, country and western and rock-a-billy musicians.

The total span of Trumpet Records (and its parent company Diamond Record Company) only embraced from 1950 to 1956 (by this time Globe Records), but the repertoire included artists of the calibre of Sonny Boy Williamson, Elmore James, Willie Love, "Tiny" Kennedy, Lonnie Holmes, Werly Fairburn and many others. The story as narrated by Marc Ryan not only tells the story of the catalogue, but of the artists and their dealings with Lillian McMurry. And of the "dirty tricks" played by some of the more ruthless names in the record business. Here is a tale of single minded determination to succeed as an entrepreneurial outsider, new to both the business and to the artists. Lillian was a white woman, under capitalised, recording and promoting "race" artists' records in a segregated southern community long before civil rights.

The story includes a brush with the underworld, a connection with Eldridge Johnson III, and an insight into the development of American music up to the birth of Rock and Roll. One of Trumpet's titles was Gonna Roll and Rock published as a Hillbilly Boogie by "Lucky" Joe Almond, dated in the book's "Sessionography" [sic] from January 18th 1954.

Marc Ryan's credentials are impeccable enough as a writer, and he is also 'one of us' as can be gleaned from this passage in the foreword: — "..... we went junking for records along Gallatin St., [Jackson, Miss.] and entered a large furniture and antique store dubbed Dixie Salvage. ... "Have you any old records?": ... "Follow me," and with a twinkle in

his eye [the salesman] motioned us to accompany him ... into the storage loft. As my eyes adjusted to the dimness, I could make out, stretching in all directions beyond the silhouette of our host, records - 78s, 45s, in boxes, out of boxes, in stacks, arranged along aisles - 30,000 Trumpet Records."

I am not in a position to check line by line the accuracy of this book, nor do I know of many on this side of the Atlantic Ocean that could, but as the main detail was relayed by Lillian McMurry and her husband Willard directly to the author, it is safe to presume a reasonably fair report. Ryan was aided by the McMurrays to trace Eldridge Johnson III, and here is the tale of the underworld, in order to purchase master tapes unpublished for twenty years of Sonny Boy Williamson; together with forty more masters of the best blues ever released on the Trumpet label.

The book is not only well produced and documented but its writing serves as a standard to which all 'phonohistorians' should aspire.

JOHN W BOOTH

**COLLECTORS** of the rarer cylinders may be interested to learn of a facsimile reprint by Symposium Records of The North American Phonograph Co's November 1st 1893 'Complete List of Records'. This four page leaflet is taken from one of the rarest pieces of ephemera and consequently shows its provenance in the quality of reproduction of page three; however in view of the rarity of the original this is acceptable, the (re)producers have not attempted to touch in the damaged areas which are unaffected in their intelligibility in all but the last line.

An introductory sheet written by George L Frow is provided with the facsimile and outlines the history of The North American Phonograph Company. Collectors of recordings by banjoist Vess L Ossman will find six of his titles here, curiously credited to V. S.[sic] Ossman, Billy Golden appears with four titles, other artists include W S Rising, Joe Natus and Geo H Diamond. A Miss Laura Bennett is shown with nine 'pipeaphone' solos, what was a pipeaphone, can any reader help?

As the North American Phonograph Coy. was not above using the same list number more than once for different pieces this catalogue would seem to be a must for collectors of such cylinders, or printed catalogues. Available by post from Symposium Records, 110 Derwent Avenue, East Barnet, Herts. EN4 8LZ for £1.00 (please enclose an A5 size stamped addressed envelope). JOHN W BOOTH

# Record Reviews

**Ernie Bayly, John Booth and Nigel Deacon**

## THE PICCADILLY DANCE ORCHESTRA

### Let Yourself Go

Who said that the dance band days are dead and gone? Not with the Piccadilly Dance Orchestra, the twelve personnel under the able direction of Micheal Law sound every bit like a 'thirties or 'forties dance band without being a slavish copy. They have their own distinct sound and balance, not mimicing but playing in the style of the great British dance bands. It is not Henry Hall nor Debroy Sommers, they are the Piccadilly Dance Orchestra.

Thoroughly professionals, they deserve a larger audience (in the last issue we gave you details of their pre-Christmas engagements, I hope that some of you attended). I have heard several modern outfits trying to sound like the bands of the '30s and '40s, but often without success. But here it is, the nearest I have heard for a long time.

Worthy of being in the collection of any dance band fan. Prove to yourself that it is the music and not just the labels and catalogue numbers that you collect, buy today's players of yesteryear's music.

On this CD the Piccadilly Dance Orchestra play what can best be described as the Fred and Ginger Song Book; and as such comparisons are inevitable, not least with the Peter Skellern album, as on the first track the P.D.O. take us into pure nostalgia with "I Won't Dance". Just the thing for a Th.Dansant, soft vocals from the trio, with trumpets to the fore, the whole number closing with typical 'chimes'. The high standard of musicianship is evident throughout the CD, if there are any criticisms then it is with the vocals, unfortunately many modern vocalists are unable to truly reproduce the sound, and less likely, the DICTION of the 'thirties and 'forties. In 'Lets Call The Whole Thing Off' we have a crispness of voice not normally heard after the 1950s, although they are 1980/90s voices. Whilst very few people talk in the clipped plummy tones of those times, (and I for one don't), when it comes to singing IN THE STYLE OF the era then some effort toward the sounds should be aimed for, and in this respect Janice Day seems to be lacking a little. Her voice is good, excellent in fact, but on this collection I feel that at times she is either singing in too high a key for comfort, or she needs to develop some 'body' in her voice. We are also treated to a clearly pronounced "Enythin" during "Nice Work If You Can Get It". Otherwise again a fine instrumental introduction. I am sorry to go on about the subject but having heard Chris Ellis fronting a BBC band, who played some less than adequate arrangements and certainly nowhere near as good as the Piccadilly Dance Orchestra's arrangements, I can only say that he achieved the original dance band singer's tone easily, thus proving it can be done.

This point apart, I have nothing but praise for the sound of the Piccadilly Dance Orchestra,

they provide excellent piano solos, fine reeds, well disciplined trumpets. Certainly in their version of the 'Carioca' the P.D.O. present one of the best performances of this number I have ever heard.

Whilst listening to this CD on several occasions, I tried to draw a comparison between the Piccadilly Dance Orchestra and any of the original dance bands, the nearest that I can make is with the Billy Merrin Band, but I invite you to listen to the Piccadilly Dance Orchestra and tell me of your comparative band.

If you like good dance music, good brass, well disciplined, then you can obtain the CD for £9.99 (or Cassette / Lp for £6.99) from Michael Law, The PDO, 19 Burlington Gardens, London W3 6BA - prices include postage within the UK.

I look forward to hearing other dance band sounds from this excellent modern band, with dips into other repertoires.

Let Yourself Go - The Piccadilly Dance Orchestra, CD LLCD 126. JOHN W BOOTH

### Unreleased Edison Laterals

Collectors of Edison Diamond discs (those 1/4" thick pieces of heavy artillery plate) have long known that the sounds captured by Edison's NY electric system studios were every bit as good as, if not better than, those of the competition's Western Electric system. Eagerly sought after are the few Edison needle cut (or lateral) recordings often made simultaneously by Edison's artists. Very few of the thousand or more titles made in the last two years (1928-9) were ever issued, due it is said to his aversion to music of a 'lower taste'. Fortunately for us, most of the recordings have survived in the vaults. Now they are coming to light on CD or cassette thanks to Diamond Cut Productions of New Jersey. In the main it is a 'hot' music collectors dream, foot tappers mostly. Although there are two tracks on the first CD release that the Old Man would surely have approved of; Praise be to his sons Charles and Theodore who, together with musical director B A Rolfe, chose some real good music for us to enjoy on the other 19 tracks. I have only been able to find a handful of these that were released as Diamond Discs (vertical cut), and then there are some differences with the takes.

'Don't wait until the lights are low' by Al Friedman's orchestra N554a recorded on 27 November 1928 has a rather low level vocal by Tommy Wier, but is well balanced otherwise, and introduces us to the high standard to be expected from the Edison system. Although the CD notes do not give a vocalist for the second track by the Friedman orchestra (N338a), there is a male voice and it does not seem to be that of Tommy Wier, can anyone help with his identity? A lively foxtrot, 'Two Lips' written by Rose and Warren, well orchestrated on track three (N337a) is the third and final offering from Al Friedman. Notable on this and most other recordings in this compilation is a slight echo, not having heard any original Edison Electrics, I do not know whether this is a result of the modern transfers or if it was inherent in Edison's system, if it is a product of the modern transfers then I wish that it had not been included. It was a usual 'trick' some years ago to add reverberation in order to disguise any residual surface noise however most producers of re-issue material have long since abandoned this gimmick.

The Californian Ramblers will be familiar to most readers as one of the best hot dance bands in New York during the late twenties, 'Cause I

feel low down' (N340b) was rejected when recorded by them on 24 July 1928. With a vocal by Ed Kirkeby (not credited in the notes) it is hard to understand why. Kirkeby and the Ramblers are listed by Brian Rust ('Jazz Records 1897-1942') for Ed52366 'Dream House' recorded on 24 July 1928, the needle cut published here (N341a) is a non-vocal recording, and bears comparison with the vertical/hill and dale cut. Kirkeby and the Ramblers also recorded vertical cut (N396a) and lateral cuts (Ed52390) of 'Vaniteaser'.

Popular vocalist Vaughn de Leath also has a triple offering, her 'Tin Pan Parade' was one of those novelty numbers that Tin Pan Alley seems more than willing to inflict on the listening public. Whether to appeal to children or childish adults, I can not raise any enthusiasm for this genre. I have to say that the changing tempo of Miss de Leath's singing did not appeal to me. At least her next two items, 'Is it gonna be long' (N352a) and 'I can't give you anything but love' (N375a) were more typical of her performances for other companies. In the latter title for once we hear the full verse and not just the chorus, sung in slow waltz time to a piano accompaniment.

Etiquette Blues (N360a) from Bob Pearce introduced me to this artist, I don't think many this side of the Atlantic will have heard his comedy patter songs. He delivers to the audience a skit rhetoric on etiquette and behaviour, like many of this style it is somewhat dated in humour but nevertheless does amuse. It is at this point that I began to draw comparisons with Mr Edison and John Reith (of the BBC) and wonder if the rejection of this item was due to Thomas Edison having a puritanical streak of Reithian proportions.

The next track alone makes buying this CD or cassette worth while. Tom Timothy and his Frivolity Club Orchestra produce a tight well disciplined, magnificent, performance on 'Tell me you're sorry' (N246a), a rarity indeed, well ahead of its time when it was cut in October 1928.

The *Saturday Evening Post* image of middle America with Ma and Pa at home with the kids, either gathered round the Victrola or Radio set is never more strongly brought to mind than with the type of singing heard on track 12. 'Ida, sweet as apple cider' must rank with 'Little brown jug' as a popular idiom. Hear Messrs Parker and Donaldson in close harmony recorded in July 1928 (N328a) and you'll know what I mean; but then after a minute the image is startled by a good short trumpet solo, one and a half minutes later the same theme is reprised on clarinet and - I think - a bassoon!

Track 13: 'Semper Fidelis' by Sousa is as American as pumpkin pie, what more can one say about it. I had to remind myself that this recording by the New York Military Band was made 1928. The balance and depth of sound from massed basses and tinkling percussion with sharp drums (and I mean SHARP, Sir!) was every bit as good as that on any mono Lp I have of this number recorded in the 'fifties or 'sixties. Compared to a contemporary electric Victor or HMV or Columbia it is brilliantly alive and must surely be a tribute to the Edison system.

Edison's musical director was B A Rolfe, he had two orchestras, one the Lucky Strike Orchestra was featured on a popular radio show sponsored by Lucy Strike Matches, this and his own orchestra (mainly the same personnel) released 18 records on the Edison diamond disc label. Two of his 1928 unreleased items are



here, 'Why do I love you?' (N117b), and 'Deep Hollow' (N252a). The first title by Oscar Hammerstein and Jerome Kern is here treated as a good foot tapper in an interesting arrangement that sometimes just doesn't quite work, perhaps the reason for being unreleased. The second title, a foxtrot, has no obvious defects apart from a somewhat noisy surface, and is blessed with a number of hot solos. According to Brian Rust, Rolfe was a virtuoso trumpeter, certainly there is some good trumpet on this track and he may well be the featured player of three. In my edition of 'Rust' (1978 Arlington House) only two titles are listed, I submit that if Brian has not heard this item he should do so as soon as possible! (I do not have a copy of the American Dance Bands Book, so please disregard my comments if this record is listed therein.) Personnel listed in the Rolfe bands are given as including alumni such as George Napoleon (sax), Harry Salter (vln), and Cy Harris (bass). Tracks 16 and 17 are by the Piccadilly Players, directed by Mel Morris in New York they should not be confused with a British band of the same name on Columbia. Here we have fast tempo renderings of 'Sonny Boy' and 'If you don't love me' complete with male vocal chorus.

The Golden Gate Orchestra often turn up on a variety of labels, as colleague Arthur Badrock will testify, it is our old friends The California Ramblers here again for their fourth and final track (18) with Sigmund Romberg's 'Lover Come Back to Me', (N841c) also found on Ed52562, vocal by Ed Kirkeby as before. The line up given by Rust is Angie Rattiner, Al King, Carl Loeffler, Pete Pumiglio, Harold Marcus, Sam Ruby (prominent on this recording), Sid Harris, C Gray, Red Rountree, Ward Lay, Chick Condon. What a sound they make; if like me you haven't got the Diamond Disc, buy this CD for this track alone.

One of Tommy Dorsey's early learning grounds was with the Seven Blue Babies, in 1928 and 1929 they recorded exclusively for Edison. Many other members were from the Golden Gate Orchestra listed above. N430a recorded on 14 September 1928 was titled 'It goes like this (that funny melody)', the vertical cut (18725) was released as Ed52508, the needle cut was recorded subsequently, rather than consecutively, and was rejected. Rust gives the vocalist as Jack Kaufman, this is borne out by a reference to "Jack" in the opening bars, however Kauffman responds to an unknown "Ed". Perhaps someone can throw light on this?

The next item, 'My Gal Sal' (N235b) was issued as Diamond Disc 52305 and is by Winegar's Pennsylvania Boys and makes another good hot jazz number worth the buy.

The last track on this 70 minutes CD, to me can only be thought of as a tribute to the musical taste of Mr Edison. An operetta style piece 'My arcady' written by Lily Strickland sung by Steel Jamison with a light orchestral accompaniment. The best that one can say is that it sounds modern.

All in all a wonderful project by Craig Maier and Richard Carlson of Diamond Cut Productions, the first of many I hope. CD DCP201D (or cassette) is available from: PO Box 305 Hibernia NJ 07842-0305, USA.

JOHN BOOTH

## Noel Coward

EMI have issued a remarkable four CD collection under the title Noel Coward: His Master's Voice. Eighty tracks from the HMV

back catalogue have been used, over seventy of these featuring Noel singing his own songs. The exceptions include numbers by Cole Porter, Jerome Kern, Carroll Gibbons and a speech by Clemence Dane which formed part of Coward's wartime troop concerts.

The tracks are in chronological order and span the years 1928 - 1952, when Noel started to record other labels. The quality of the sound is high, even the earlier recordings, with almost complete removal of surface noise. Digital remastering of early discs can produce strange sounds, but even the 1928 'Room with a view' sounds excellent. The only noticeable loss is that some sibilants occurring in the middle of words have been partially removed along with the surface hiss, but the words themselves remain clear, in spite of Noel's rapid and sometimes very quiet delivery.

The late Kenneth Williams offered some interesting comments on the singing of Coward's songs some years ago, when he was approached by Norman Newell of HMV to record some of them, including 'Mad Dogs' and 'Mrs Worthington': "The Coward Lyrics are not easy to sing; they require the author's clarity of diction and an awful lot of abdominal breathing. Taken at speed lines like

*"In the Malay States*

*There are hats like plates*

*Which the Britisher won't wear"*

are particularly challenging because you must avoid elision (vowel suppression). It's rather like Liszt's piano compositions; they are too difficult for the average instrumentalist. You need a technical virtuoso".

One disappointment was that I was unable to find Noel's Cole Porter parody, 'Let's Do It'. This was used by Noel as a highlight of his post war cabaret routines, and is a favourite with some Coward enthusiasts. But there are many high spots; 'Dance, Little Lady' is naively charming and 'Mrs Worthington' bounces along merrily, as does 'There are good times around the corner'. Mono masterpieces like this are scattered abundantly throughout the collection.

Disc 4 contains three previously unreleased tracks, all from his 1946 musical romance 'Pacific 1860'. 'One, two, three' is a chorus number with a superb melody, good harmony and characteristically witty lyrics. 'I never knew' is a quiet song in similar style to 'The party's over now', and unashamedly sentimental. The string accompaniment is beautifully recorded and includes a prominent violin solo in the introduction. 'I saw no shadow' is less memorable and has a middle section with unusual modulations; probably the least successful of the new releases but an interesting addition nevertheless.

The discs are accompanied by a substantial booklet by Sheridan Morley, author of the first Coward biography and co-editor of his diaries. There are some good photographs from rehearsals and performances, including a most striking 'thirties pose by Yvonne Printemps, and another by Noel and Gertrude Lawrence as "The Red Peppers".

This selection is a credit to the engineers who have retrieved the sounds from the original discs, and to the abilities of the technicians who recorded Noel's voice in the early days. It will be a welcome addition to the collection of any Coward enthusiast. CDP 7805812, 7805822, 7805832, 7805842

NIGEL DEACON.

Ernie Bayly adds... I have various of the Noel Coward songs on HMV 78 rpm discs. They were pressed into a very crackly hard shellac composition that the company used then,

which added another strata of noise to the hiss. On hearing these CDs I was extremely amazed by the immaculate sound. Only at times is there an almost inaudible hiss. The crackle has gone completely. It is possible to hear sibilants and aspirants quite naturally, bearing out my pet theme that engineers put more on the recordings than could be reproduced at the time. It thus gives some four and a half hours of clean listening pleasure. I wish that all of my favourite 78s could be reproduced like this!. EB

## Josef Locke

Following the runaway success of the film 'Hear My song', there is now a third CD compilation of songs and ballads sung by Josef Locke reissued from his 78rpm (mainly) records, titled 'A tear, A kiss, A smile', as readers will have seen from the discography in TMR 80, compiled by Sarah Hobbs, most of Locke's recordings could well have made by tape recorder. Within a very short time after World War II machines of high quality were being used. The pressing of records into shellac composition was still the limiting factor in the audio chain to the listeners' ears. But I assume that the ballads and songs in this compilation were taken directly from the original tapes, (if these were not 'lost' like some of Count Bassie's have been), to the digital process. With excellent notes by Ralph Harvey, this compilation has 25 tunes ranging from the older 'Bonnie Mary of Argyle', through such as 'A brown bird singing', 'The Melba Waltz' to the more modern 'Strange Music', 'When you hear Big Ben'. 'Silent night' and 'Adeste Fidelis' bring us up to Christmas at the end of the CD. Again another feast for those preferring tuneful music well-sung. 77 minutes playing time on EMI CDGO 2042. EB

## Noddy

Enid Blyton served generations admirably with her books of stories for children [until the advent of the so called 'political correctness' of the present time would have his friend Big Ears termed "Auditively Challenged". Ed.] and then in November 1953 came a set of 78s with pictorial labels of Ms Blyton telling her tales of the little Nodding Man with his friends Big Ears, The Wobbly Man, Mr Jumbo, Mr Tubby Bear and visits to Toyland, Humming-top Village and Bouncing-Balls Town. The attractive music by R G Noel-Johnson and Phillip Green enhances the stories and the songs by young Ian Hockridge and a children's chorus. There are some clever sound effects, making the whole package one of the very best I've heard for young children. Despite the invasion of TV, I have witnessed that these stories still hold the wrapped attention of children. Parents accustomed to saying, "Just one story then off to bed" can continue to do so using the programming function of the CD player. An excellent reissue playing 56 minutes on CDEMS 1429 (also on tape cassette). Whilst Noddy will suit first-school age, Sparky's subject matter is better right through the middle-school. SPARKY is from the USA but the speech is clear enough to be followed universally, and colloquialisms are easily followed.

## Geoffrey Chaucer

Geoffrey Chaucer was England's early writer in ENGLISH who gave us "The Canterbury Tales". Pearl Records has produced an excellent series of tape cassettes the tales read in the original middle English by Trevor Eaton. Many of us struggled through Chaucer's text

in school without the benefit of someone to speak it for us. My own experience was somewhat like 'the blind leading the blind' as far as spoken Chaucher was concerned. Later a few 78rpm record sides were issued and so I learned to recite some pieces of the tales in Middle English. Pearl hopes to complete Trevor Eaton's reading the whole during 1993. This is a noble project, which will fill the double aim of education as well as pleasure for those who love Chaucher's work. I know of no other complete spoken Chaucher in such a dedicated way. I assume that this project has limited sales so is on cassettes that can be produced in small batches as required, but it is very highly recommended for quality. This is a scholarly approach in a scholarly voice. (I deplore those productions in Modern English in which readers or actors speak in what I call a yokel accent which relates to no particular point in history. Such an accent infers that there were no scholars or intelligent people in Chaucher's day.) I cannot write at length about the whole series, so I suggest that you contact Pavilion records Ltd., Sparrows Green, Wadhurst, Sussex TN5 6SJ for further details, quoting this magazine.

### Joyce Grenfell "Requests the Pleasure"

This is a three compact disc set reissuing 61 of her best recordings. [See also page 2354 TMR 80 for ECC 18 - a Cassette release by EMI of some of this material. -Ed.] She began her career (professionally) in March 1939 in Herbert Farjeon's revue at the Little Theatre, London and made her first HMV records later that year (*The American Mother / The Village Mother*. B8930 released September 1939). She wrote most of her own monologues, such as the nursery School series, ("George, - Don't do that."). Richard Adinsell wrote most of the music to accompany her songs. This selection is opened beautifully with Joyce singing "I'm Going to See You Today" (from 1964) still delightfully fresh. The following entertainment reveals her complete insight into to situations upon which each scene is based. They are not all satire but fun is often drawn from accurate perception making the listener look closer into the scene. Like, say, the best of Disney's cartoon films need to be seen at least twice to take in all detail at the side of the main character, or the way that a big painting in a gallery must be studied for some while. I've listened several times to these monologues and songs, with each hearing fresh details come into my mind's eye. That is the benefit of owning this set. I'm sure that following being present at a Joyce grenfell recital one would wish to remember everything more clearly. This is certainly an occasion when a recording is valuable. Norman Wisdom adds fun when he joins in "Narcissus" and "I Don't 'arf Love You", and in allowing the name 'Norm' to be used as "Shirley's Boyfriend" one thinks of the rather 'gauche' character he portrayed in films and is still to be seen occasionally on TV or in pantomime. In fact, all of the Shirley sketches are fun including "Foreign Fella" which finds her taking a foreign student to Hampton Court Palace after the clerk in the post office had finished picking something out her teeth and deigned to serve him! The "Ferry Boats of Sydney" fascinated Joyce, as did me! "Three Brothers" reminds me of the family next to which I lived at one stage when the sister became a drudge. A parody of "Come Into The Garden Maude" (a duet with actor Julian

Orchard) makes it clear that 'Maud wasn't born yesterday!'; while the young lady admirer being led on by an author, "Life and Literature", spoils it all by suggesting bringing Mummy to a *tete-a-tete* dinner at his home. The fussy, elderly, eccentric, lady professor describing her biography of her naturalist grandmother, in "Eng. Lit. 1", is truly like a couple by whom I was lectured at college. "Joyous Noise" tells about singing oratorio at the Royal Albert Hall by a ladies' choir - with suitable sung examples.

An excellent booklet written by Virginia Graham comes with the set. But, I take up the cudgel against her when she says that five shillings in Joyce's younger days is equal to 25 pence now. It most certainly does not (it was equivalent at the time of decimalisation in 1971) - it equals something much more now. [A glance at a chart I have to hand shows me that five shillings - 5s. - would buy a full pound (1lb) of tea in 1942 whereas today it would cost about £4 -Ed.]

Three CDs each of about 76 minutes duration of wonderful entertainment, which as one package has a catalogue number CD JOYCE 1. (I hope that there will be JOYCE 2. -EB)

### Nat 'King' Cole - Ballads of The Day

I'm sure that fans of Nat 'King' Cole will have purchased the discography by Roy Holmes to which Arthur Badrock drew attention in the last issue of TMR. During his life time Mr Cole recorded more material than was issued by Capitol in both his pianist capacity and as a singer. So it is that this CD contains previously unissued ballads, "I'll never settle for less", "Marilyn", "Why can't we try again?" and "For a moment of your love". Originally "Ballads of the Day" was a 10 inch Lp compilation, then with 'singles' added it became a 12 inch and now here we are with bonus tracks added to make a 61 minute CD giving us 21 ballads. There is another bonus - the excellent notes written by Will Friedwald going deeply into the material (showing as a sideline, that Sinatra and Cole were never in competition at Capitol due to their different approaches). He reveals a sinister occurrence... It seems that when Nat 'King' Cole died, Capitol Records needed more Lps by him to fulfil an eager market demand. So 'singles' were brought out of the vaults and for reasons best known to themselves, "Dave Cavanaugh over dubbed various atrocities on the original recordings of Cole Trios and Nelson Riddle accompaniments ... Altogether, Cole and Riddle recorded about 250 titles together, or ten very full compact discs' worth."

As readers who still have unmutated copies of the early Lps or singles will know, there was nothing wrong with the Trio or Nelson Riddle's original beautiful accompaniments, so let us hope, that like this CD "Ballads of the Day" there will be a complete series that gets right back to the originals. There must be legions of Nat 'King' Cole and Nelson Riddle fans who have the 'atrocious' type Lps and who will be angry when/if they learn how they have been fooled.

But it is happening all the while ... Why are producers allowed to do this? (The work of the country singer the late Jim Reeves suffered similarly.) If the original style was wrong, why did the public flock to see the artists and buy their records? Put this on your CD player and please the whole family as they listen to superb Nat 'King' Cole sing ballads still suitable for this day and age. CAPITOL CDP 7997762

ERNE BAYLY

## Taal piece

a letter from Mr Otto Snell, London SW5

I am intrigued by an item on Imperial Oddities [TMR 80 p2340], the article mentions 'A Taal supplement' and refers to 'Tien uur' and 'Sonder jou geld' sung by Gerald Steyn.

It may interest readers to know that the titles are in Afrikaans which became an official language in 1925. Prior to this year the official languages of South Africa were English and Dutch but the latter was no longer spoken and only used in the written form in government and official proclamations.

There is no doubt in my mind that the record titles mentioned by you in the article are in Afrikaans.

'Tien uur' ('Ten o'clock') could be Dutch for the spelling is the same as in Afrikaans but 'Sonder jou geld' ('Without your money') in Dutch is spelled 'Zonder jou geld' and the baritone's name, Gerald Steyn, is spelled the Afrikaans way. The Dutch language does not employ the letter 'Y' but uses instead 'ij' or 'ei', thus Steyn is spelled Steijn or Stein in Dutch.

Furthermore, in the initial development stages of Afrikaans the language had no name and was referred to as 'Die Taal' - 'The Language' -, a term still in use today. Hence Imperial's 'A Taal supplement'.

I am somewhat surprised to read in your article that the recordings were made in London in 1928.

Although Afrikaans is now the most widely spoken language in South Africa and Namibia in 1928 it was spoken by a relatively small number of people many of whom were not able to afford an expensive gramophone. I am therefore surprised to learn that Imperial considered it an economic proposition.

I am employed in the motion picture industry, on the sound recording side. The South African film industry dates back to the beginning of the century; the first Afrikaans talkie was made around 1933 'Moedertjie'. It is therefore possible that a record industry existed there in the 1920s and that Imperial Records may have been recorded in South Africa.

I will be in South Africa early in 1993 and will make some enquiries with contacts in SABC, and find out if they have copies of these recordings in their extensive library.

I would be interested in learning of any other Afrikaans (Taal) language recordings dating back to the earliest part of this century.

Yours faithfully,



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